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LABOUR'S PEACE AIMS

THE declaration of policy issued by the National Executive of the Labour Party this week-end is the first pronouncement of a real war and peace policy by any responsible political organisation either here or in France, not to mention Germany. Written in a style refreshingly free from the jargon of recent years, it expounds the terms upon which Labour would be prepared for negotiations "with a German Government which has not merely promised but actually performed certain acts of restitution" to the Czechoslovak and Polish peoples; and makes it clear that Labour does not trust the Nazis "either to perform such acts or to abstain from future aggression." Looking beyond the immediate aim of victory, the declaration then tackles the problem of Franco-German relations. Wars, it argues, will recur in Europe unless we can reconcile the French claim to security with the German claim to equality. The former can only be assured by the continuance after the war of Anglo-French co-operation and the development out of it of a wider association open to all nations: the latter by the prevention of "any attempt from outside to break up Germany" or "to deprive her of such security as her neighbours rightly claim for themselves." The declaration then sketches the new world order, founded on Socialism and Democracy, which Labour will strive to build, links the attack on international anarchy with the attack on social inequality within the nation State, and joins with Mr. Wells in pressing for the adoption of a new Declaration of the Rights of Man. The section devoted to international reconstruction follows the lines of Mr. Bevin's remarkable speech last week, arguing that a post-war depression can only be avoided by a bold policy of international public works and the development of colonial territories under an International Authority. In this peaceful war against poverty it invites the German people to play their part and declares Labour's determination to "oppose imperialist exploitation, whether Capitalist or otherwise." If this were the declaration not of the Opposition but of a British Government it would do much to consolidate relations with France and offer a basis for serious propaganda in Germany. Clothing in precise form the sentiments of the vast majority of our people it reminds us once again how unrepresentative the Chamberlain Government is. Its attitude to Russia is clear and statesmanlike. Though condemning aggression in Finland, it gives no countenance to those who would discover in the U.S.S.R. our real enemy: Labour realises the dangers of spreading the war.

Volunteers for Finland

The Russians, fighting with great determination in spite of heavy losses, have made a "dint" in the Mannerheim line at the Viborg end, which they may be able to widen into a breach. This bad news is hardly balanced by the claim of the Finns that they have destroyed a Russian Division, which was attempting to take the Mannerheim Line in the rear, by a march through the wooded country north of Lake Ladoga. For the rest, the Russians, who had at first some scruples, are now bombing and machine-gunning open towns and villages on a scale that suggests a policy of terrorism. Meanwhile, in the Commons, by a defiantly indiscreet question, Mr. Gallacher has brought to light the fact that an organisation working under the Finnish Legation is allowed to recruit volunteers for service in Finland from conscript troops in this country. This was more or less the method by which Italian and German "volunteers" were raised for Spain, though in these cases there was rather less camouflage. Coupled with the fact that the French Ambassador has now followed the British in quitting Moscow "for consultation," this step in the gradual progress of "non-intervention" brings us perilously near to actual war with Russia. It has not been disclosed by what route the volunteers will reach Finland, nor whether they will travel as groups of individuals (as the men of the Republican International Brigade did) or as formations under British naval escort, on the Italian model. The thwarted instinct of pugnacity may be driving us into perils that no one is facing coolly. Russia under German organisers may in time become a formidable adversary.

The Coventry Murderers

The earnest efforts of Mr. De Valera and Mr. Dulanty, backed by resolutions from the municipalities of Dublin and almost every town in Eire, failed to secure a reprieve for the two I.R.A. murderers, and they were executed at Birmingham on Wednesday. In law and equity there was, of course, no case for a reprieve; the only argument is political. No Irishman, outside the fanatical ranks of the I.R.A. itself, has a word of excuse for the cruel murders at Coventry. But history has taught us that men who die for a political crime by the sentence of another nation will always be regarded as martyrs. Their death revives, in fresh and vivid colours, all the bitter memories of bygone oppression. By these executions we have made it harder for Mr. De Valera to lead his own people without repression, and immensely harder for him to behave in this war as a benevolent neutral. It was a disaster that the decision lay with Sir John Anderson, whose official experience in Bengal has in such matters developed rather the policeman's than the statesman's outlook.

Another Indian Deadlock

Mr. Gandhi's interview with the Viceroy has resulted in another deadlock. The conversations will have no sequel, though Mr. Gandhi hopes that they may be resumed in the indefinite future. The main point at issue is that the Viceroy is not authorised to concede the central claim of Congress for "self-determination." It claims that Indians, represented presumably by a provisional interim Ministry sitting as the Viceroy's Council, shall work out and negotiate the future constitution, and submit it to an elected constituent assembly. The British Government, on the other hand, means to proceed as it did before. It will be the architect of the New India as of the old. It will do the drafting and negotiating, but it will consult all the creeds, interests and minorities involved. That procedure resulted in a constitution that all India rejected, the Moslems and the Princes, no less than Congress. Till this initial difference is settled in India's favour there will be no progress. Thereafter, the main difficulties, and they are grave enough, will be (1) the refusal of Congress to admit the Princes, so long as they remain autocrats, into a Federated India; (2) the interim arrangements for the defence of the Indian Dominion, which Whitehall proposes, it is said, to reserve for thirty years; and (3) the apparently hopeless deadlock between Congress and the Muslim League. But is it really true, as the *Times* correspondent in Delhi states, that the Muslims now regard themselves as "a separate nation"? Mr. Jinnah's unyielding sectarian outlook is not, in our experience, typical.

Meat Rationing and its Effects

Meat rationing is to come in definitely on March 11th, on a basis which will limit the amount of money spent rather than the amount of meat consumed. It is very difficult to estimate how this system will work out in practice; but for certain educational institutions the expenditure allowed works out at less than half the present expenditure, even where this has been already cut drastically since the outbreak of war. On the other hand, the sum allowed probably exceeds present expenditure in the majority of households in the country, in which butchers' meat is still something of a luxury. Accordingly, the chief burden of the reduction seems certain to fall on the relatively well-to-do, who will be able to soften the blow by taking more meat-meals in restaurants, so long as these are able to serve meat without demanding the surrender of coupons. For the general body of relatively well-to-do consumers, the recent doubling of the bacon allowance obviously eases the position; and for the rest the rationing will probably not make much difference, if it is equitably applied. What will be essential will be the maintenance at a high level of supplies of fish and of unrationed meats such as rabbits and "offals." There is clearly a danger that the rationing of the main types of meat will cause a price-ramp in those substitutes which remain unrationed, including cheese; and certain sections of the public, who for health reasons cannot live on starchy foods, will be liable to suffer really serious hardship if they are poor. For example, it seems pertinent to inquire what has become of the Government's promise to provide special rations for diabetics, who have offered, through the Diabetic Association, to give up their unusable sugar ration in exchange for an extra supply of meat.

Subsidies and the Cost of Living

Sir John Simon last week made public the fact that the Government has been using the method of subsidy in order to check increases in the cost of essential foods; and it has been stated that this policy is now costing the taxpayers round about a million pounds a week. We go to press without knowing what the Chancellor has said in amplifica-

tion of this statement in the course of Thursday's debate; but it is manifest that, if the cost of living can be held steady at an expense of this order, the policy is well worth while. It is true, as Mr. Keynes has argued in a letter to the *Times*, that keeping down prices is no way of restricting consumption; but it would be an altogether wrong policy to reduce consumption of essential foods by letting their prices rise. Where such consumption has to be cut down, let it be by rationing, and not by methods which hit the poor without any appreciable effect on consumption by the well-to-do. The extension of the subsidy method to standard articles of clothing, said now to be under consideration, has much to commend it; and a good deal more than £52 millions a year would be well worth spending in order to prevent the upsets which are bound to follow on a disorderly rise in prices. The Government's original statement was, however, so qualified that it is impossible to tell from it whether what is intended is price-stabilisation for essential goods or merely a prevention of sporadic price-increases, without any attempt to hold the general level down in the long run. A million a week is too much to pay for the latter, which will not prevent the "vicious spiral" of prices and incomes, or the inflicting of very serious hardships on large numbers of people whose incomes are fixed, or reduced by war conditions.

Man-Power and Production

The latest unemployment figures seem, in the main, to reflect weather conditions rather than any real change in the economic situation. Of the total increase of 157,000 over last month's total, 130,000 is accounted for by building, public works construction, and agriculture, which were all seriously interrupted by bad weather on the day of the count. When allowance has been made for this factor, and for the seasonal factors normally operative in the weeks after Christmas, it seems as if the underlying situation has not greatly changed. Certainly the places of workers removed into the armed forces or recruited for civilian defence services have not yet been fully filled by workers taken on from the ranks of the unemployed. As against these withdrawals from ordinary employment, there was in January the usual batch of school-leavers competing for the first time in the labour market; but, as there were fewer workers than in normal times taken on for the Christmas trade, there were also presumably fewer discharges. In general, the conclusion is that, except in a few skilled trades and exceptionally busy areas, there is still plenty of labour available; and that accordingly, given the right measures, it should be possible to expand production a good deal further, not only in the war trades, but also in such ways as to reduce the need for restricted consumption by the civilian population to tolerably manageable proportions. "Given the right measures" is, however, in view of the Government's record hitherto, a very far-reaching qualification.

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Economic Co-ordination

[FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT]

Criticism of the Government grows, and the mood of the House of Commons becomes more truculent with every week that passes. This is all to the good, because signs of increased ministerial activity are already becoming apparent.

The Great Debate on economic policy which took place on Thursday of last week turned out to be rather a damp squib. For this it must be admitted that Mr. Herbert Morrison was partially responsible. He had a good case, and as usual he knew his facts; but, sensing a certain tension, and an uneasiness on the Treasury Bench, he attempted to reduce the temperature and "play down" the debate by being facetious. Bad jokes do not mix well with a detailed analysis of the machinery of Government, and the result was disappointing. The Prime Minister took full advantage of the escape-ladder unconsciously provided for him by the spokesman of the Labour Party. He made no jokes, good or bad. Without touching any of the larger issues involved or allowing a single gleam of imagination to filter through, he gave a crisp, cold, and lucid account of the existing economic organisation, which seems to consist mainly of inter-departmental committees, and which he flatly declined to change. The House rather likes the Prime Minister when, in one of his most intransigeant moods, he becomes almost a parody of himself. But the majority of Members remained unconvinced.

Mr. Amery was much more effective than Mr. Morrison. He was Secretary to Mr. Lloyd George's War Cabinet, which he rightly described as a vastly superior instrument for the conduct of war than the present Cabinet, which resembles it in no respect. A curious thing happened during his speech. Mr. Chamberlain, who certainly cannot accuse a man, who presided over two of the great Departments of State for several years, of "lack of experience in Government" suddenly became visibly angry. He interrupted Mr. Amery twice with a brusque demand for concrete proposals. These he ultimately got in the shape of an impassioned plea for a small War Cabinet composed of Ministers without portfolio, and for more vigorous direction at the summit. It was the only tense moment of the Debate. The House, always impressed by Mr. Amery's sincerity and obvious ability, and dimly aware of personal issues underlying the open clash of debate, was inclined to think that he had had the best of the exchange. But once again the Labour Party came to the rescue of the Government. Miss Wilkinson was even more facetious than Mr. Morrison. She opened her speech by assuring the Right Honourable Member for Sparkbrook that "things were not really as bad as all that."

Sir John Simon wound up quite gaily, and by the end of the day the Government Whips looked almost happy. Despite continued rumblings from Printing House Square, there has been on this issue a definite, although perhaps limited, reprieve.

On Tuesday Mr. Lloyd George, who is in remarkable form these days, went into action again upon the subject of agriculture. Every weapon in his gigantic armoury was brilliantly deployed, and when he picked up the wretched Agriculture (Miscellaneous War Provisions) Bill and said that if he were Prime Minister he would throw it into the wastepaper basket, everyone knew that he spoke the truth, and that he would be right. The high spot of his speech—"You cannot dig for victory with a pair of Treasury scissors"—was greeted with a roll of applause.

In the matter of food production, the performance of the Government up to date has been so far below the level of events as to be quite indefensible. And when Sir Samuel Hoare began his reply by raking up the old, old story of the Corn Production Act of 1921, there was a general groan. Sir Ralph Glyn subsequently expressed the view of the House when he asked whether it was really necessary for the Lord Privy Seal to make party points at this time against one who had, after all, done more to win the last war than any other man.

The result of all this is that we are likely to get in the near future a much more vigorous and comprehensive direction of the war effort; but it must be confessed that all the running in the House of Commons is at present being made by Mr. Lloyd George, by Sir Archibald Sinclair, and by a few Conservative and Labour back-benchers. The front Opposition Bench gives one a growing impression of impotence and indecision. Is it lack of effective leadership? Is it that they are unduly weighed down by the responsibilities which unquestionably rest upon their shoulders? Or is it that they do not consider that the time has yet come to run the risk of increasing those responsibilities. Waiting is an ennervating game.

BALKAN PROBLEMS

FEW of us were deeply moved when we read that the statesmen of the Balkan Entente had held their annual meeting in Belgrade. The event, indeed, justified our indifference, for they reached no decisions that were either novel or important. In the political sense this backward peninsula seems to most of us a chaos. It stands, none the less, in a vital economic relationship to Western Europe, but more especially to Germany. One may call it for want of a better word a colonial relationship. It cannot, indeed, be settled from the West, for its soil is closely peopled and laboriously tilled. There is in it no *Lebensraum* for mass emigration; the German sword, in Hitler's phrase, cannot here clear the way for the German plough. But it could offer careers to large numbers of German officials and technicians. Above all, it produces a big exportable surplus of agricultural produce—pigs and plums, wheat and maize, currants and tobacco. Rumania has also her fatal political wealth of oil, though her wells are nearing exhaustion. There are deposits of aluminium, which like the oil, furthers the activity of more civilised Powers in the heavens. Industries are few, inefficient, and dependent on high tariff walls. The colonial relationship consists in the exchange of manufactures and machines for these primary products. Since the great slump ruined the world's free market, this trading has become avowedly political. In the last generation the ambassadors of the Great Powers competed with one another in Balkan capitals for the right to build railways and supply cannon. In our day some Dr. Schacht descends on a Balkan capital and secures by barter the whole surplus wheat crop against a doubtfully equivalent value of German goods. It is the German Reich that trades: over the countinghouse hum the bombing planes with the Swastika symbol. Chattering still about its independence and neutrality, the Balkan State finds itself the vassal of the armed merchant from Berlin. He may march down the Danube, if he does not get all the wheat and oil he wants. On the other hand, if he is satisfied, he may further the territorial designs of a complacent client and defend him from the appetites of his neighbours. But a Balkan statesman, before he sells his pigs or his tobacco, must scan the whole horizon. There are Allied ships beyond the Dardanelles and an Allied army assembled in Syria.

Why, in this unenviable situation, do the Balkan States fail to combine? For many weeks before the Entente met in Belgrade, the Turks had been trying to bring this about. Their ambition was to include Hungary and Bulgaria within the Entente, and then to consolidate all the States of the Danubian basin in an armed league of neutrals, pledged to render each other mutual support. The Western Allies naturally favoured the project, but Germany and Russia worked as inevitably against it, while Italy, a candidate for hegemony in this peninsula, disliked a plan that would have lessened her influence over each unsupported State. On Rumania falls the responsibility for thwarting the expansion of the Entente. In this microcosm, as in the greater world, there are sated and unsatisfied Powers, and the Entente was in its inception a league of the sated to maintain the *status quo*. It may seem singular that Rumania, a weak military Power, threatened at once by Russia, Hungary and Bulgaria, should have refused to seek her own safety by concessions which would have turned two neighbours into allies. The explanation seems to be that she has bought the protection of the Germans by satisfying their economic demands. She will deliver an increased tonnage of oil and maize and turn Bessarabia into a vast plantation for raising soya beans. In return for these raw materials of victory, it is believed that Germany has vetoed or at least postponed the threatened Russian march across the Dniester.

Of the two unsatisfied Balkan States, Bulgaria is the more modest. Her unhappy adventures under that brilliant megalomaniac, King Ferdinand, seem to have taught her wisdom—if it is really true that she is content to wait until the Settlement after this war for the satisfaction of her reasonable claims. Rumania ought to restore that portion of the Dobrudja which she snatched in 1913, for it has a solid Bulgarian population. As natural is Bulgaria's wish to have a port on the Aegean. The problem that Hungary raises is more difficult. The population of the territory she was compelled to cede to Rumania is perplexingly mixed—with 43 Rumanians, 35 Hungarians and 11 Saxons in every hundred. It is a nice question which section of it was the more unhappy—the downtrodden Rumanian peasants under Hungarian landlords in the old days, or these expropriated magnates and the alien middle class, Saxon and Hungarian, under Rumania. Home Rule for Transylvania, the solution usually proposed, would not of itself insure justice to races locked in a class struggle. More might be hoped from a system of cultural autonomy that would allow each race to manage its own social services. But for the present, Rumania will concede nothing.

There are experts who see salvation in a future Balkan Federation. It is not an easy solution to imagine. The sated must turn generous: the furies of past struggles must be forgotten: neighbours must learn to talk with courtesy in many languages. More awkward still are the contrasts in social structure. The aristocrats of feudal Hungary look with disdain on the peasants of Jugoslavia and Bulgaria. Nor is there in this peninsula any State predestined to lead the rest, a Prussia, or a Piedmont. But the chief weakness of this solution is that it fails to solve the central problem of the colonial relationship. Even in the military sense it limps. A Balkan Federation would be in population a Power almost of the first rank. But the taxable capacity of its peasants could not sustain a modern army. It could afford neither a great air fleet, nor the mechanical equipment of motorised divisions, nor any navy worth reckoning. Nor could it manufacture its own arms and munitions: it would have to buy them on credit from abroad, through the banks of Paris, London or Berlin. Finally, it still would be the market garden of the urban West, a client as before in its economic life. The single colonies would have federated, so to speak, into a Dominion. Of which Empire?

Colonies, *Lebensraum*—call it what you will—this is Europe's fundamental problem, and a major issue in this war. The old struggle for empire has swung away for the moment from Africa to rage on the banks of the Danube and the Baltic shores. Without the industrial development that modern warfare exacts, these States of the second rank cannot be effectively sovereign. The bankers of London and Paris would take from them, politely and

with decorum, their illusory independence. The armed financiers of Berlin would crush their nationhood also. The alternative must indeed lie eventually in Federation, but it must be a union that embraces client and patron, East and West alike. Its starting point must be the sterilisation of military power, so that men may work and trade without the hum of planes round farm and countinghouse. That can be done only by entrusting defence to a federal force. The next step is to visualise this continent as a single economic unit, and plan its work and the exchange of its products for the common good. That ought to mean, if statesmen are big enough to face the problem, the transformation of the colonial relationship. Since the West must still finance the East, let it be the Federation as a whole that does it and controls it, rather than the banks that work for a flag.

We and the Germans alike will have to face the problem of post-war unemployment. We can serve our workers and theirs, no less than the colonial peoples, by an organised transition from the making of tanks and machine-guns to the construction of tractors and electrical pumps, whether for the Balkans or for Africa and India. But the aim should be to avoid that curse of the colonial relationship, the exploitation of the rural region for the unbalanced production of money crops. The policy should rather be by financing public works and suitable industries to encourage an all-round development. Perhaps, as Mr. Wells proposes, it should define the Rights of Man. But it would make its way more certainly by promising to level the standard of life of the agricultural peoples, both white and coloured, up to that of their industrial patrons.

SEVEN SLEEPERS—AND SIX WHO ARE HALF-AWAKE

THE thirteen "trusty and well-beloved" persons who were invited to constitute a Royal Commission for enquiring into "the distribution of the industrial population," and have just reported the results of their labours, may reasonably have felt serious misgivings about the terms of their appointment. They were instructed to study the causes which have influenced the present distribution and the probable direction of any future changes; to consider the social, economic and strategic disadvantages of industrial concentration in particular areas; and to "report what remedial measures, if any, should be taken in the national interest." These tasks must have looked formidable enough when war was merely threatened, and had not actually broken out. As matters stand to-day, they look not merely formidable, but intimidating. For, with the depressed areas rapidly becoming once again hives of industry and London threatening to turn into a depressed area needing special measures of temporary salvage, what is anyone to say about the future? The "trusty and well-beloved" had indeed done most of their work before the outbreak of war; but when they came to sign their report in December, most of them must have wondered not a little how much of it was likely to be of any practical use in facing the situation that will arise when the war ends and the task of reconstructing British industry has to be faced in earnest.

Arguing mainly in the light of the pre-war situation and in pre-war terms, the members of the Commission not unnaturally failed to arrive at any unanimous conclusion about what ought to be done. Diagnosis was easy; for the mere facts were plain enough. In recent years industry and employment have been shifting steadily both from the countryside and from the old centres of the heavy and export industries to the South and Midlands—above all to Greater London, which shows since 1932 a net increase of 532 factories, as compared with a total of 644 for Great Britain as a whole. In the "services," as distinct from manufactures, the relative growth of Greater London is no less pronounced. The Metropolis now includes within its enlarged boundaries roughly one-fourth of the entire population of the country. It is, indeed, arguable that this is not because London has been growing too fast, but rather because there has been no parallel growth elsewhere, as there would have been if we had been making proper use of our available productive resources. But to assert this is not to do away with the problem, but rather to indicate the futility of attempting to deal with it in merely negative ways—by restricting the growth of London—without at the same time taking positive measures to promote economic growth elsewhere.

This, however, is precisely the futility into which the majority of the Commissioners have allowed themselves to fall. They have felt themselves driven by the horrid spectacle of London's planless, sprawling growth into the advocacy of restrictive measures for checking the further establishment of factories in the London area, except where special reasons can be adduced; but they have been so fearful of interfering with the freedom of "private enterprise" in general to do its damndest that, outside London, they have proposed no compulsory action at all, and that, both in London and elsewhere, they have made their recommendations almost completely negative.

This applies much less to the three members of the Commission who have signed a series of reservations amounting practically to a minority report than to the seven complacent persons who have said as nearly nothing as was compatible with using a large number of words. Indeed, the majority "reservationists" clearly agree in the main with the three more thoroughgoing dissentients who have presented a separate report. The division between these two groups of protestants is of secondary importance: it relates to the character of the new authority which both agree should be set up to deal with the problem on a national scale, and not to the need for creating such an authority and arming it with quite wide powers. The fundamental cleavage is not between the majority and the minority, but between the seven do-nothings and the six activists, who are at any rate united in recognising that something ought to be done.

What, however, is to be done? The real difficulty that confronted the six commissioners who were not mere stick-in-the-muds was that, as long as industry is left in private hands and the sole incentive to economic development is the prospect of private profit, it is a sheer impossibility to secure that the resources of production shall be adequately used, or the opportunities of employment be properly related to the available supplies of labour and to the economic use of the existing public services, housing facilities, and general "overhead" equipment of the community. The commission, however, was not asked to advise upon the expediency of scrapping the profit-system and setting up an alternative economic order; and presumably even those of its members who are Socialists felt that it would be inappropriate to wander outside the manifest intention of the Royal Warrant to which they owed their appointment. Accordingly, even the minority remained safely within the assumptions of capitalism, and merely sought, by creating a national body armed with compulsory powers of restriction and by adding to these powers certain powers of inducement as well, to shift the balance of advantage so as to persuade the profit-seekers to behave in future in a somewhat less anti-social fashion than has been hitherto their wont.

The consequence is that all the reports engender a certain scepticism in the mind of the candid reader—the more so because they all in effect leave the question of the precise powers that ought to be vested in the new bodies they propose to be settled by further investigation, and do not put forward any clear or concrete positive propositions of their own. The plain truth is that it is easy to formulate *negative* proposals for preventing obviously undesirable forms of economic develop-

ment; but it is not at all easy to be confident that the enforcement of such proposals will not be to reduce the total volume of production and employment, by discouraging growth in some areas without offering any sufficient inducement to development elsewhere.

This danger is the more serious because manifestly the lesson which twentieth-century capitalism has most completely learnt is that the road to fortune lies not in expanding output but rather in contracting it whenever the market shows any signs of stickiness. "How to Make High Profits on a Small Output" would, in fact, be much the most appropriate title for a really up-to-date manual of capitalist practice; and there is the risk that, in seeking to check those sections of industry which do still show some will to expand, we may merely generalise the restrictive tendencies which are already widespread enough to make the traditional case for capitalism look quite farcical to-day.

Indeed, the moral that emerges most plainly from the very lucid summary of facts and tendencies which fills up a large part of this report is that planning, in any real sense, and the control of economic development by private, profit-seeking *entrepreneurs* cannot live together—at any rate as far as the major industries are concerned. If we want to plan the development of industry with a real regard for national needs, so as to make the fullest possible use of the available resources of materials, men, and capital equipment and to uproot as few people as possible from the areas in which they have grown up and have their social being; if we wish to avoid the devastation of the countryside and the dereliction of whole areas which have been devastated already; if we want to readjust our economic system with the minimum of social loss to changed conditions of consumers' demand, world trade, and productive technique—then we must plan positively, and not merely in a negative way. In effect, we must put the constructive processes of investment and economic development under planned public control, and advance, if not to Socialism, at any rate a very long way towards it.

These considerations have special urgency to-day because, now that we are at war, we are plunging fast into new forms of development that are bound to be uneconomic in the long run. The depressed areas may regain a temporary prosperity while the war lasts, but only at the cost of still greater devastation hereafter. When peace comes, it will not be merely a question of correcting the tendency of industries to crowd into Greater London—whatever may have happened to it by then—but of rebuilding our economic system from the very foundations, to suit the conditions of a new world of which even the structural ground-plan is at present mostly unknown. In relation to this prospect, the proposals even of the minority of this fumbling Royal Commission appear almost nugatory, and the seven sleepers of the unqualified majority look merely silly. But what else were we to expect? The "trusty and well-beloved" were not asked to help build a new Britain, but only to furnish Mr. Chamberlain with excuses for inaction. This they have successfully done—the majority by making only derisory proposals, and the two minorities by offering suggestions which it will be easy to rebut on the ground that they will check "private enterprise," without offering any substitute for it.

A LONDON DIARY

FRANCIS WILLIAMS is the third Editor of the *Daily Herald* to lose his job since the paper was reconstructed under the joint management of Odhams and the T.U.C. William Mellor, you will remember, fought a losing battle and, after he was sacked, held on in an honorific advisory capacity, while Stevenson sat in the editorial chair. Then the same thing happened to Stevenson; he too was kicked upstairs into obscurity but eventually when the war began found himself, with many other Odhams' colleagues, in the Ministry of Information. Francis Williams, who succeeded Stevenson, was, I believe, also offered a sinecure in Odhams but refused it; his place is taken by Cudlipp, an able executive who came to the *Daily Herald* from the Beaverbrook press. Cudlipp is a good salesman of news, hardboiled, intelligent and without any political interests—a view of life clearly reflected recently in the *Daily Herald*. I should expect Cudlipp and Odhams now to go all the way; there will be less "politics" even in the leading articles, and it will be a miracle if the *Rights of Man* controversy is regarded as something more than a stunt to be quickly dropped. It will be argued that in wartime nothing is wanted except cheerful, non-critical stuff that is supposed to be good for morale. Circulation people usually hold that serious thinking of any kind, politics especially, bores readers and reduces sales. The absurd thing is that a Labour Party which can poll seven or eight million votes should not have an organ of opinion which puts politics above the desire for the biggest circulation. The *Herald* must be one of the Big Four? So be it, but it could be a good political paper if it was content with the circulation of the *News Chronicle*. Why insist on playing second fiddle to the *Daily Express*?

* * *

What about the Rights of Man discussion, considered on its merits and not as a job of salesmanship? Once again, a critic can say, Mr. H. G. Wells is meeting an emergency with fine words, demanding the various incompatible things that we all want without any discussion of the means by which we are to get or keep them. Man *shall not* be imprisoned without trial; he *shall* be given a proper education and enough food and the opportunity of living a fine life as a citizen and heir to our democratic heritage. Oh, yeah? says the cynic. Is that what you get out of a totalitarian war? You squeezed a little League of Nations out of the last; you demand nothing less than the liberation and permanent happiness of mankind out of the present bit of unpleasantness? And much more to the same effect. But I think there is more to it than mere escapism and wishful thinking. Mr. Wells is right that we have one thing in common with other periods when declarations of human rights have been published. There is a realisation amongst people of many creeds and in many countries that we are now technically in a position to enjoy an economy of abundance. Anything that crystallises in men's minds their agreement that Socialism is both possible and necessary is to the good. We may get this positive conception of human rights applied in one place after another as the war develops or peace comes, just as the democratic rights of free speech, the parliamentary vote and the rest of it gradually won their way all over the world in the period between 1770 and 1850. And is there really anything more absurd in 1940 in believing in free socialist communities than there was in believing in free democracies in the world of serfs and despots and persecution and wars which moved Voltaire to prophesy the revolution he would never see? If you add that Voltaire would not have liked the revolution if he had seen it, and that H. G. Wells won't like it either if he sees it, you may be quite right, but your remark will nevertheless be irrelevant.

* * *

Public discussion of the effectiveness of our measures of economic warfare centres on Rumanian oil. As if by tacit consent no one mentions Spain. There the position is broadly that Franco is still bound by barter agreements to pay off his debt to Germany and Italy for their aid during the Civil War in minerals, notably iron, copper ore and mercury, all of the first importance to Hitler's war machine. His experts, to the number of some thousands, are still in Spain at Franco's elbow. What Spanish minerals do actually reach Germany? The American *New Republic* of January 22nd has, over the signature of Selwyn James, a journalist of high standing familiar with Spain, this startling statement:

> The British-owned Rio Tinto Company is still forced by the Franco Government to supply the Nazis with 35,000 tons of copper ore per month—a fact which, of course, has been omitted from the English press.

The suggestion of the article is that this ore, with other in-

dustrial raw materials and agricultural products, reaches Germany by way of Italy and the Brenner Pass, a line of communication that is said to have been greatly improved of late. My inquiries have brought no definite confirmation for this statement, but those who should know the facts regard it as probable. Certainly the Dutch protested some time ago that while we rationed them severely in copper, we allowed it to reach the Germans freely through Italian channels. The Americans also accuse the authorities at Gibraltar of partiality towards Italian shipping. There is a possible answer that the Allies are trying to use the technique of pre-emption. The French have concluded and we are negotiating an agreement with Franco for the barter of minerals against wheat. But the question remains: is there a yawning gap in the naval blockade, which leaves Italian ports open for Germany's use? And if so, how much can we hope to effect by the mechanism of the blockade? This question might well be raised in the House. The Germans know all the facts.

* * *

The bright lads of the Communist Party thought up a good one when the *Daily Worker*, announcing its desire to find out the real truth about Finland, asked for visas for Ivor Montagu to go and report on the Red Army side, and Claude Cockburn (Frank Pitcairn) to follow along with the Finnish troops. From the Russian side of the line, about which we are now quite ignorant, a reasonably objective report would certainly be extraordinarily interesting. But Ivor Montagu would scarcely be objective. What of the reporting from the Finnish side of the trenches? For a long time I feared that the immense animus of the press against Soviet Russia might result in wholly misleading reports, and I was unwilling to accept accounts of Russian bombing and machine-gunning of civilians without better confirmation. But the confirmation has come from William Forrest, who is reporting for the *News Chronicle*. His account is appalling and no one will accuse him of an anti-Soviet bias. I got to know Forrest when he was reporting in Spain. He is honest as well as "Red" in his sympathies. Indeed, in Spain he was regarded as a Communist and trusted by the extreme Left as well as by the moderate elements of the Popular Front. A few months ago I should have thought his friendship for Moscow unshakable. No one, except Stalin himself, could have shaken it. I suppose if Frank Pitcairn had gone to Finland he would have discovered that the men, women and children sheltering in the cellars of Viborg were really inventions of the capitalist press; no doubt he would have discovered the authentic spot at which "butcher" Mannerheim, at the head of his vast herd of brutal Finns, was about to descend upon the helpless population of the Soviet Union. Together, Claude Cockburn and Ivor Montagu would have daily explained to us how the Finnish and Russian soldiers, who appeared to be killing each other, were in fact jointly marching towards the red dawn of Socialism. I am really sorry that they did not get their visas; it would have been lots of fun.

* * *

I have been making some inquiries about the figures of conscientious objection. Generally speaking, I should say that the Government has been successful in the sensible attempt announced by Mr. Chamberlain to avoid the muddle and discredit that arose in the last war over the treatment of the C.O. Up to January 6th, 4,988 applications had been considered by legal tribunals; 714 had been given unconditional exemption, 2,229 work under civilian control, 1,177 were given non-combatant duties in the forces and 868 rejected as liable to military service. Up to January 16th there have been 897 appeals, of which 255 have been heard. Out of these 97 were put on the "C" list, that is non-combatant duties in the forces, and 71 put in class "D," that is refused exemption altogether. Some of those in the last two categories have already been summoned to their medical boards and have refused to attend; there are, I believe, already some 70 or 80 who have taken this stand. Technically speaking, the next stage should be a court martial and one wonders whether the Government will embark on this step. It would certainly mean some C.O.s going to prison again and a repitition of last war's difficulties in dealing with the out-and-out objector.

* * *

Who said this?

Only equals can come to an understanding. For an understanding to be a real understanding not a conquest masked by phrases, a real equality of rights is necessary between both parties. This implies that not only Russia but also Finland must have the right *not* to enter into the understanding. That is crystal clear. . . . One should not use force to bring other peoples into alliance with the Russians. One should only employ a really voluntary, a really free understanding; and that is impossible unless there is freedom to dissolve the association. . . . The freer Russia becomes and the more decisively our Republic recognises the freedom of secession for the non-Russian nations, the more will the other nations desire an alliance with us, the less friction there will be, the rarer will be the cases of real secession, the shorter will be the periods for which some nations will secede from us and the closer and stronger will be the brotherly alliance of the Russian proletarian peasant republic with the republics of every other nation.

Lenin said it in *Pravda*, No. 46, May, 1917!

The Finns must say that they have the right to decide according to their own judgment upon their fate, and the Russian who wants to deny this right is a Chauvinist. . . . Alexander I and Napoleon exchanged populations: the Czars shifted the Poles about. Are we to continue this tactic of the Czars? That would be to deny the tactic of internationalism; that would be the worst sort of Chauvinism. . . . We affirm: "A Russian Socialist who denies freedom to Finland is a Chauvinist!" . . . No, Russian people, do not presume to enforce your will on Finland. No people can be free if it itself oppresses other people.

These are quotations from Lenin's speech on the National Question (May 12th, 1917). CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to K. Duval.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C 1.

Only 34, the Earl is well known not only as a scientist but also as an authority on explosives. This may not be surprising when it is known that he is descended from the man who has been given most of the credit for the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. That was the first Earl of Suffolk.—*Manchester Evening News.*

The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, known as the Fany, is a corps of voluntary mechanical transport drivers who serve their country in times of national emergency. They serve at home or abroad. Members must be British subjects and of good social standing.—*Nursing Illustrated.*

The ideals which we are fighting for at the moment are British Christian ideals, and are in any case better interpreted by men of British blood who, in our past history, have often managed to run the War Office successfully, and also to promote quite successful business concerns at a profit to the country and the investing public respectively.—Letter in *Truth.*

What an unspeakable blessing for mankind if national and international relations were organised on the plan of Association football. What a boon if the game of international politics were played in the spirit of clean, healthy sport—"strife without slaughter, and art without malice."

What fun it would be for immense crowds of interested spectators to see the statesmen of the world in jerseys fighting out their League questions on some stadium, say, on Wimbledon Common, if only they agreed to abide by the decision of the referee when he blew his whistle and cried "foul." Hurrah! for Mr. Chamberlain as centre-forward.—Cardinal Hinsley in the *Daily Telegraph.*

Strict impartiality is reflected in the choice of works for performance at the London Philharmonic Orchestra's concerts at the Davis. In December the main work on the programme was the Second Symphony of Sibelius, greatest Finnish composer. Last Sunday the principal work was the Fifth Symphony of Tschaikowsky, greatest Russian composer.

In fairness to the memory of Tschaikowsky, it should be emphasised that his music was the product of Tsarist, and not Bolshevist Russia. —*Croydon Times.*

WHAT ABOUT THE COLONIES?

THE colonies did not after all turn out to be even a proximate cause of the war and have therefore fallen back into obscurity. Yet their loyal enthusiasm for the democratic cause is quite real. With good reason, also, they pray to be delivered from any risk of subjection to the Nazis who have branded their peoples as "half-apes." Colonial papers have columns of rejoicing over any success of *our* arms, and many actually show some disdain for the attitude of Indian Congress as trying to snatch political advantage from a common peril. On the other hand they look to us hopefully for appreciation. Every slightest notice in a home newspaper is seized upon and quoted. Yet Ministerial statements, and so-called "Empire" broadcasts, stereotyping the fallacy that Empire and Commonwealth are one, have concentrated on Dominion efforts. No one will underestimate the material and still more the moral value of the contribution made by the free Dominions, but the no less spontaneous support of the unfree colonies is fully as significant. No colony has needed to be held down to its "duty." This goodwill demands something more than lip service on our part to the democratic ideal which the colonial peoples credit us with wishing to preserve and develop. It is worth while therefore to ask, "What about the Colonies?"

In normal times, few who really know the colonies could agree with the theory that makes them a source of profit to their "owners." For what are "colonies" but those underdeveloped or completely undeveloped parts of the unfriendly Tropics where mankind, immigrant no less than indigenous, has been most steadily worsted in the struggle with brute nature? Not a year ago the Empire *Nutrition Report* put it baldly that nowhere in the Tropics is the natural food supply enough for full efficiency. It is a feature distinguishing the colonies, for example from India, that natural poverty and geographical isolation have left them with no real leaders, no reserve of wealth, and certainly no tradition of learning like that of the Brahmins. How, then, can colonies "pay" when to remedy these deficiencies must cost so much?

But war alters everything. The freely conceded control of colonial resources is now an immeasurable advantage, when other markets are closed and foreign exchange precious—and the colonies' help (let Dr. Goebbels take notice) needs no army of occupation to extract it. Even a sketchy catalogue is impressive. Thanks, for example, to Malayan tin and rubber, Northern Rhodesian copper, Trinidad oil, and other minerals and rare metals, material for munitions is assured. Diamonds are now indispensable for accurate engineering work and West Africa was Germany's greatest supplier of the relatively cheap variety, while even gem diamonds bring foreign exchange. Native crops give us our boasted margarine supply, and all the vegetable oils and fats we need from palm-oil, copra, and groundnuts, also ample supplies of tea, cocoa, and incidentally sisal, and useful supplementary sources of cotton, coffee, sugar. We benefit no less by keeping these essentials from the enemy, and sometimes forget that the colonies may miss their German markets. To preserve the willing co-operation of the colonial Empire in so vast a field of output is worth more care and forethought than it is wont to get.

It may seem paradoxical that, in return, the colonies themselves would undoubtedly welcome above all things a share in the work of the fighting forces. Having called a truce to their political activities they seem to consider that for the moment the test of our democratic principle will be our readiness to let them share in the war itself. In the last four months nothing has given such genuine pleasure as the regulation withdrawing the ban which barred any but pure European subjects from holding His Majesty's Commission—and perhaps nothing has caused such pangs of jealousy as the welcome given here to the Canadian forces. We would not wish to shelter behind colonial man-power, but if the authorities are concerned to keep enthusiasm in the colonies at its early heights let them at once organise a unit or units of a Royal Colonial Air Force. There is the making—under discipline and direction—of fearless pilots among the dashing lorry-drivers one has encountered!

Material and economic problems are more complex—and made no easier by the defects of our publicity services. The colonies, being almost by definition poor communities, are faced with extraordinary expense. Some of this is inevitable. Nazi ways are such that precautions are necessary even in the wilds of Africa—though it may be suggested that measures of a police nature are more urgent than A.R.P., and especially than the military display favoured by a few colonial Governors (and probably also by most Africans or West Indians!) The British Treasury, one understands, takes responsibility for only part of the increased cost of Imperial defence, and if development is not to be entirely held up it will need to be generous. Widely advertised "gifts" ought really to be spent exclusively inside the colonies, if not gently discouraged; for in the last months Colonial Governors have almost without exception been budgeting for reduced or uncertain revenues, drawing on accumulated reserves, and announcing new taxes. New taxation so far has one excellent feature. The chance has been taken to increase direct taxation on those best able to pay, including Europeans, while leaving the native poll tax untouched. But besides heavier indirect duties there are also increased export taxes on native grown Uganda cotton and Gold Coast cocoa.

These export taxes raise the vital question that the price paid for the British controlled output of colonial staples is below that ruling in world markets. It is true that the undertaking of the British control to refund or at least to share any profit has given great satisfaction, but there are still possibilities enough of friction. The pre-war price of several commodities was at very nearly a "record" low level, so that there is slack to be taken up. What of wages and services that might have benefited from keener demand? As at home, the control is vested in the regular trade, but since in every colony the produce-buyer is also the local retailer this looks like putting the producer into the hands of his enemy—especially as it becomes clear that there is no wartime boom in the price of exports to compensate for the already greatly increased cost of goods purchased from these same buyers.

Meantime the slogan given to the colonies, victory by increased production, has catches. They have had experience of over-production. To speed up the output of minerals, a wasting asset, is frankly to mortgage the future—and plantation owners are asking pertinent questions about the return on their long-range commitments for expansion. Moreover, mines are already short of staff. It may indeed give Governors an opportunity to follow up the *Nutrition Report* by urging an increased output of food crops. But the whole policy can succeed only in proportion as colonial backwardness is conquered by education and health services, and by that general direction of the people which looks like going by the board under stress of war conditions. The aftermath of the last war should be a warning, but the process has already begun of dispensing with indispensable school and hospital maintenance and extensions—and even agricultural supervision—for want of funds and staff. Some planned developments are in danger of being cancelled for the duration. There may be a golden chance to widen the field of selection for the services—and to make room in them for more colonials, including Africans. But the qualified Africans at least are all too few, and for some time to come the more Africans so used the greater will be the need of the very highest quality in the supervising European officers.

War complicates the problems by taking the vital decisions, especially as concerns personnel, out of the hands of the Colonial Office, and putting them into those of Chiefs of Staff to whom colonial affairs are of no concern, and of the Cabinet in which the colonies are no longer represented. It may however appeal to these authorities that, even if their efforts win the war, they will be in no position to do their duty by the colonies after the war unless they allow the colonial governments the men they need for their vital work. The list

of exempt occupations is already a long one. It does not yet include the young men required to keep the government and the development of the colonies at concert pitch, and since the public is too little informed to be anything but apathetic we stand to lose the loyalty and goodwill of the Empire by failing to class it as one of our essential services. Sir Philip Mitchell, Governor of Uganda, has the right word in proclaiming even now that the only hope lies in a *continuous* attack on colonial poverty.

W. M. MACMILLAN

GOOD THINGS

IT always surprises me to find anybody worrying about the amount of meat he is to be allowed to eat—feeling distressed at the prospect of having to go without bacon at breakfast and regarding a proposal to have meatless days as a threat of semi-starvation. If people like this admitted that they were luxury-lovers mourning over the disappearance of the daily steak as a Roman epicure might have mourned over the disappearance of nightingales' tongues, I should sympathise with them, for vanished luxury is deserving of a sigh. But I suspect most of them of looking on meat as a necessary of existence and of fancying that without it they would in course of time be reduced to skeletons.

Though not a vegetarian, I agree with those who hold that this meat-worship is a superstition. There are many things—many luxuries even—that are much more indispensable to our happiness than meat. Among them I count tobacco, well-fitting shoes, comfortable chairs, comfortable beds, coal, gas and electricity, soap, tooth brushes and conversation. I would rather have these and live on vegetables than go without them and luxuriate on three meat meals a day. Better a dish of beans beside a warm fire than roast pork and apple sauce in an ice-house. I have been told that it is easy to get used to the absence of soap, but I am sure that for most of us it would be a great deal easier to get used to the absence of sausages.

Hence, as one who believes in pretending (as far as is possible) to look on the bright side of things, I applaud the rationing of meat and agree with Sir Leonard Hill who suggests in a letter to the *Times* that it may be a blessing in disguise. The recognition of blessings in disguise, it seems to me, is one of the chief functions of philosophy. Life has apparently always been full of them, and human beings would have been much happier if they could have penetrated the disguise at the time of the first impact of the blessing. I know a man who looks back on an attack of pneumonia as a blessing in disguise, but it took him several years to find this out, and by that time the pneumonia bacillus had disappeared beyond the reach of his gratitude. Possibly the childish illness that crippled Sir Walter Scott was a blessing in disguise, sending him into surroundings that were the essential food of the imagination of a romancer, but I doubt whether any one realised this at the time when it would have been most consoling to realise it. We always treat illness as an evil while it lasts—an undisguised curse to be got rid of as quickly as possible.

There is one exception to this, perhaps—the minor illnesses of childhood. I can remember in early life feeling elated rather than depressed when I was just ill enough to stay away from school. Not that I disliked school, but, as I sat reading about Red Indians by the fire during school hours, I felt that somehow I was scoring over the little slaves who were being asked about the area of the Caspian Sea or the exports of the Gold Coast. I did not know the phrase at the time, but, if I had known it, I should no doubt have said to myself on such occasions: "This is a blessing in disguise." I should have probably gone on cultivating a tendency to minor illnesses if it had not been for an old lady with a passion for homœopathic remedies who used to break into the house whenever she heard that there was an invalid to be experimented on. I felt as scared of her as if she had been a witch as she produced her little bottles and poured her drops into about fourteen different tumblers which I was supposed to sip in rotation. More than once I locked her out, but always in the end she got in. In the circumstances minor illnesses became not worth having. School was preferable, at least, to homœopathy. I became a model of regular attendance. Perhaps the old lady was a blessing in disguise. She may have prevented me from becoming a *malade imaginaire*.

As one looks back on one's life through the deceptive haze of memory, however, one is perhaps tempted to exaggerate the number of blessings in disguise of which one has been the beneficiary. Even among the disagreeable experiences one has passed through there are many that one would not like to have missed. I have known men who thanked their stars for the poverty and hardness of their upbringing. The very terrors of the past become treasured pieces of the human comedy, and misfortunes, when they have been survived, are seen to have been gates to opportunity. Men are supposed to say at times that they wish they could live their lives over again and what a different thing they would make of them. But I wonder how much of his past—even of his unhappy past—the ordinary man would like to see altered out of recognition? As a rule, I fancy, he is glad to have been born in such-and-such a place, to have been brought up in such-and-such surroundings, and to have experienced crises that at the time struck terror into the soul. People looking back become aware what a useful part those very unpleasant things, blessings in disguise, have played in their lives. It is easy for men of a certain temperament to become Panglosses about the past. It is the present and the future that plunge us into apprehension and gloom.

Well, there is at least one thing that we need not be apprehensive or gloomy about—the meat ration. We have only to read the *Times* headlines to Sir Leonard Hill's letter:

Healthy Diet in Wartime
Advantage of Vegetable Foods

to feel reassured. And Sir Leonard himself makes it clear that, though meat is good, it is not nearly so good as the vegetable matter that goes to its creation. "It must be kept in mind," he writes, "that vegetable foods are much the cheapest source of supply for maintenance of health, growth, and energy. In the conversion of vegetables into flesh a large part of the energy is used up by the animal, and the people who eat the flesh have to pay for this." In other words, flesh not only is grass, but is largely wasted grass. The sheep and the bullock have absorbed so much of the energy of the grass that there is only an unfair portion of this left for the meat-eater. Confronted with this fact, the meat-eater may reply: "But I am not Nebuchadnezzar. I cannot eat grass till it has been converted into flesh, and I should get much more good from a dish of exhausted grass in the form of a chop than from a meal of a 100-per-cent.-energy grass in a meadow." It is an argument to which, so far as grass is concerned, I can see no answer.

Sir Leonard himself, indeed, would not press us to become grass-eaters. He has his eye on other more stimulating vegetable matter. If he were rewriting the ancient sentence, indeed, he would obviously say, not "All flesh is grass," but "All flesh is vegetables." And he would add that, for your health's sake, you do not need to eat vegetables in the form of flesh but should eat them in their pure form. "Health can be maintained," he writes, "on wholemeal bread and vegetables, the latter being made into appetising soup, with a little meat, as the French do. Such a diet, amplified with milk, herrings, and fruit, is better for health than one consisting of white bread, cakes and puddings made largely of white flour and sugar, and meat." The trouble is, of course, that meat-eaters want to be healthy without giving up meat. They would rather be healthy on roast beef and pills than on wholemeal bread and soup and herrings.

That is why rationing will probably turn out to be a blessing in disguise for them. Nothing but the compulsion of circumstances will turn them from their poisonous dishes. They have a natural taste for poison that only a strict rationing

scheme can cure. Even when they take vegetable food—in the form of bread, for example—they prefer it to be at least negatively poisonous. They love white bread, I am convinced, largely out of contrariness and because it can obviously never be a rival to their beloved meat. And they like to have their vegetables cooked vilely in the majority of hotels and restaurants because badly cooked vegetables provide them with an eternal justification for not becoming vegetarians.

Such people clearly have to be saved from themselves. They do not know what is good for them and will never learn except at the hand of necessity. And it is the same with the beer-drinker. He, like the meat-eater, is consuming vegetable matter in its most wasteful and, perhaps, deleterious form. "Barley used to produce beer," writes Sir Leonard, "if eaten, yields far more energy than the alcohol in the beer." It would not be a bad wartime measure, it seems to me, to compel every publican to provide his customers on at least two days a week with barley to eat instead of barley in liquid form. After a few months of this, they would begin to glow with health; the liverish look would disappear from their eyes; they would look back and bless the day on which they began to eat barley. It looks as though there may be quite a large number of blessings in disguise in store for us. Pangloss may have been right. In any case, in this coupon age, we may as well agree with him as not. Y. Y.

Miscellany

A GOOD GERMAN

To-day marks the centenary of Queen Victoria's marriage to Prince Albert and, if we except the wholly preposterous prince who married Queen Anne, it also marks England's first experience of a Prince Consort. That experience was both successful and salutary. It has not needed the tawdry illusions of the footlights or the more appealing sentimentality of the screen to impress on the modern public that this royal marriage was, in fact, what every such marriage is supposed to be in Fleet Street, namely, a love match. The Queen herself, whose performances with the pen must ever excite the envy of all journalists, has set down in simple and glowing language the depth of her love which moves the observer more than scene after scene by Mr. Housman or even the highly coloured performances of Miss Anna Neagle. To posterity and the historian it is, however, something far more important than a happy marriage. The introduction of Prince Albert to England not only stabilised the monarchy, it profoundly influenced life in these islands and was not without its important effects in Europe as well. It is no doubt true that the Prince failed, where many a less competent person would have succeeded, in winning the affections of Englishmen. A Norfolk nobleman, eccentric as only Norfolk noblemen can be but a not unrepresentative peer, put on his brightest pair of check trousers when he heard the good news that the Prince was dead. And a Victorian wag faithfully summed up the result of the Queen's labours to make her husband understood when he saw the gold encrusted figure of the Albert memorial and observed, "Albert the Good has become Albert the Gilt." But if the Prince failed in this respect he won two victories which were more important and more enduring.

The first was over the Queen herself. It has long been the custom of writers to skid nervously past the grave defects of character shown by Queen Victoria when she was still a virgin queen—though in fairness it should be observed that she herself in her own writings never spares or condones these faults. In the early months of her reign the Queen surrendered much of the monarchical power into the hands of Lord Melbourne—her shrewd and indolent Prime Minister. This was partly due to inexperience and partly due to infatuation amounting to love for his odd and whimsical character. More than that she allowed Lord Melbourne to fill her court with the ragtag and bobtail of the British aristocracy: the loose and ambitious family of Paget swarming like locusts, as the Tory Press complained, in all the best places. Greville tells us that the Foreign Secretary (Lord Palmerston) combined a visit to Windsor Castle with an attempted rape of one of the Queen's ladies in waiting. In the background of this somewhat bawdy atmosphere was the sinister figure of the Baroness Lehzen pandering to all the Queen's foibles and stimulating her love of chatter and gossip. For the Queen February 10th, 1840, marked the end of the old life and the influences of that life were well represented in the Chapel Royal on that day—her racy old Hanoverian uncles and aunts, the Baroness, the posse of Paget bridesmaids and the favoured but exclusively Whig guests. From all that sordid partisanship the handsome youth by her side (he was not then 21) saved her, but it was not till two years after her marriage that the Baroness was finally banished and that the Queen became completely dominated by her husband. After the Prince's death, she confessed that every hour and every minute of her life had been ordered and governed by him. In this enlightened age such a state of affairs may seem remarkable and even regrettable: in the nineteenth century it was the height of domestic bliss. It was not only that he patched up her relations with her mother and the Tories, that he managed her money and her houses and that her political influence was gently bolstered up by him; it was also that he transformed her from a flighty, self-willed girl into a Christian woman.

His second achievement, and it can hardly have been a more difficult one, was to restore to the monarchy the dignity which it had lost under William IV and the political influence which it had lost when the Whig Prime Minister was the confidant of the sovereign. The Prince, coming fresh to England from the simple, healthy and almost Arcadian remoteness of provincial Germany, saw far more clearly than the Englishmen, who were familiar with both its squalor and its profits, the dangers and injustices of the industrial system. For the first ten years he was in England he laboured by means of educational and housing schemes to relieve poverty and distress, and it should always be remembered that one of the most significant sights at the Great Exhibition was the model dwellings for workmen partly designed by himself and now rather pathetically housing a park-keeper in one of the London parks. His work during those ten years gave him his apprenticeship to English life and English politics. During the last ten years of his life—for he was only 42 when he died—his political influence was stronger and more confident. In home politics the Prince's views on education, the Army, the defence of these islands and penal reform were laid before Ministers in a series of neat and masterly memoranda, and after his death the Queen referring to these documents observed: "They are Gospel now." Though there is no reason to suppose that the Cabinet regarded these memoranda as divinely inspired in the Prince's lifetime, there is every evidence that they did direct and divert the course of legislation.

In foreign politics the Prince was of course in an immensely strong position. He not only had first-hand knowledge of Germany at a time when the German question and all the complications of German unity were making themselves felt, but he was in regular correspondence with a host of German princelings who often gave him better and later information than was available at the Foreign Office. Outside Germany his uncle the King of the Belgians and his first cousin the King of Portugal were in constant political correspondence with him. For the English statesmen's handling of foreign policy the Prince had a contempt which even his iron self-control could not wholly conceal. That genteel interest in Continental politics so fatally characteristic of the twentieth-century Englishman was unknown a century ago. It is fair to say that Lord Palmerston and even Lord Clarendon took up foreign politics with the same confidence and reliance on good fortune which is felt by a practised poker player as he settles down to pluck the pigeons. To the Prince, who had all the gravity, all the method and all the balance of one nurtured in the old liberal universities of Germany, such flippancy and disregard of principle seemed revolting and immoral. And undoubtedly in his clashes with Palmerston he did exceed what the British Constitution and even prudence laid down as the limits of royal interference.

Whether the Prince was right to interfere and whether Palmerston was wrong in furthering British interests by stirring up strife in Europe is now an academic question as is the subject freely debated during the 1870's whether the Prince did not elevate the political influence of the Crown to dangerous heights. Those topics may now be safely left to the blackboard and the lecture notebook. But it is possible that the Prince saved the monarchy from extinction. The other claimants to Queen Victoria's hand such as a grotesque Prince of Orange, Prince Albert's own extremely foolish brother or the rather comical Duke of Cambridge completely lacked the patience or the ability to extricate the Queen from the

difficulties in which she was floundering in 1840. If, in addition, the Queen's husband had not been above reproach morally the monarchy would certainly have been endangered when that wave of republicanism—based on self righteousness and radicalism—swept through England in the seventies. Truth to say the Prince—and through him the Queen—gave monarchy a leg up throughout Europe. A more dingy, eccentric and decadent set of personages than those who filled the multifarious thrones of Europe in 1840 can perhaps only be imagined by those who have been privileged to attend a gathering of the collateral relatives of one of our lesser noblemen. The Prince and Queen at least showed that sovereignty had nothing in common with the dwindling enchantments of despotism, but that in an altered world, when inspired by intelligence and application, it could still control and guide the destinies of men. The tragedy of the Prince's life, and it was one that clouded his closing years, was the knowledge that his heir was quite incapable of continuing and sustaining the political influence of the monarchy. For it is indisputable that although King Edward VII strengthened the crown in the affections of the people his disinclination for work and inaptitude for affairs destroyed his father's work. There are to-day many signs that the Prince is more truly appreciated than at any time during or after his life and even Nazi publicists were inclined to salute his shade with the familiar compliment that he never abandoned his nationality and took delight in thinking that some corner of "the dear Mausoleum," as Queen Victoria called it, was forever Germany. Although the Prince was an ardent German nationalist, believing firmly in the union of Germany and Austria, he was as far removed from the German spirit of Bismarck or of Hitler as is the twentieth-century commercial peer from the barons of the Wars of the Roses. It seems impossible to imagine that the Prince's particular blend of simplicity and ability, which Englishmen fondly imagine still marks the average German, was as transitory as Wordsworth's "visionary gleam." It is no doubt ridiculous to suppose that if you scratch a Nazi a Prince Consort is underneath, but it is not ridiculous to hope that Germans of his calibre are not utterly extinguished. For it is an encouraging portent that even if Englishmen could not feel attracted by one of such pre-eminently German qualities they could at least admire him, and that a conservative politician could murmur after his funeral "To-day we buried our sovereign."

ROGER FULFORD

MEWS FLAT MONA

A MEMORY OF THE 'TWENTIES

SHE flourished in the 'Twenties, "hectic" days of Peace,
'Twas good to be alive then, and to be a Baronet's Niece.
Oh, Mona! it's not so good now!

Mona in the last war was a Problem Child,
She roared and ranted, so they let her run wild;
Expelled from St. Faith's, she was shot from a gun
At a circus she'd joined, for a bet, at Lausanne.
Oh, Mona! they're rid of you now!

She had her hair bobbed, when the fashion began,
To catch the eye of some soft-hearted man.
Oh, Mona! they're just as soft now!

A man was caught; she ran off in her teens
With the heir to a fortune from adding-machines,
But he failed to reckon up the wear and tear,
By the time she left him he had iron-grey hair.
Oh, Mona! you're subtracted now!

Mona took a flat in a Mayfair Mews;
To do that then was to be in the news.
Oh, Mona! it wouldn't be now!

The walls were of glass and the floor of pewter,
This was thought "intriguing," but the bathroom was cuter;
On a sofa upholstered in human skin
Mona did researches in original sin.
Oh, Mona! they're concluded now!

Mews Flat Mona, as a Bright Young Thing,
Led a pet crocodile about on a string;
In a green cloche hat and a knee-length skirt
She dragged the tired reptile till it was inert.
Oh, Mona! it's gone to earth now!

Diamond bracelets blazed on her wrists
(They were not presented by misogynists)
And Mona got engaged to a scatterbrained peer;
His breach of promise cost him pretty dear.
Oh, Mona! he couldn't pay now!

When she gave a dance she engaged three bands,
And she entered the Ritz once walking on her hands;
She drove round London in a crimson Rolls,
"The soul of every party"—as if parties had souls!
Oh, Mona! the party's over now!

Mews Flat Mona, as a Period Vamp,
Spent a week-end in a nudist camp;
Her barefaced behaviour upset the crowd
And she came back sunburnt under a cloud.
Oh, Mona! you're in the shade now!

She babbled of Coué and also of Freud,
But her book of engagements was the one she enjoyed.
Oh, Mona! you've no dates now!

She lived for a time with an Irish Jew
And thought it an "amusing" thing to do;
He taught her to take morphia, heroin, and "snow,"
A giddy life, but she was used to vertigo.
Oh, Mona! no pipe-dreams now!

Too bright were her eyes, the pace was too fast,
Both ends of the candle were burnt out at last.
Oh, Mona! you're blacked out now!

She stepped from the top of an Oxford Street store;
She might well have waited a split second more
For she fell like a bomb on an elderly curate
And his life was over before he could insure it.
Oh, Mona! you're exploded now!

When they came with a shovel to shift her remains
They found a big heart but no vestige of brains.
Oh, Mona! that accounts for you now!

WILLIAM PLOMER

THE MOVIES

"Dark Rapture," at the Polytechnic Cinema
"Destry Rides Again," at the Leicester Square Theatre
"The Hunchback of Notre Dame," at the New Gallery
"The 400 Million," at the London Film Institute Society

FAR the best films shown this week are two documentaries, *The 400 Million* at the London Film Institute Society's Sunday show, and *Dark Rapture*. The latter is a full-length travel film—a record of the Leila Roosevelt-Armand Denis expedition which spent over a year in the most inaccessible regions of the Belgian Congo; equipped with three cameras and sound apparatus, they have succeeded in bringing back some of the most enthralling pictures imaginable. The film concentrates not on animals, but on the tribal life and customs of the people who inhabit the river banks, the pigmies of the forest, and the giants who live far in the interior, isolated by a barrier of active volcanoes. The expedition must have been on excellent terms with the natives, for they were allowed to photograph intimate details of their life. The initiation ceremonies for the boys of the river tribe, a hunt for small game in the forests, and the building of a bridge by the pigmies are filmed obviously with the full co-operation of the natives. But perhaps the most intriguing sequences of the film were taken when the expedition crossed the ridge of volcanoes and visited the territory of the giants. These people, most of whom are

over seven foot high and of extreme physical beauty, have features which suggest that they are descended from the early Egyptians. The King and Queen of the giants greeting the sacred cattle, and a dance of great subtlety of rhythm and movement, are beautifully photographed. The film culminates in a wild elephant hunt where a capture is successfully accomplished right in the eye of the camera. Unlike most travel films in which all the resources of the studio (and probably a machine-gun as well) seem to be just behind the camera, this picture is remarkable for the genuineness of its atmosphere, and the beauty and naturalness of its photography.

It is something of an anti-climax to turn from this exciting nature picture to the comparative dullness of a "Western." *Destry Rides Again* presents the strange spectacle of Hollywood attempting to recreate something that it took great pains to destroy, namely the original Marlene Dietrich of *The Blue Angel*. The flamboyant, provocative Dietrich of the German films was groomed, slimmed and refined to emerge as Hollywood's conception of the exotic. The process did not quite destroy her (as it did Anna Sten), but the result proved definitely not " box-office "; and after a valiant struggle, after recruiting the aid of Joseph von Sternberg, the best leading men, and lavish productions, Paramount finally failed to renew Miss Dietrich's contract. Then, it seems, the idea of resurrecting the original Dietrich occurred to Universal. For this purpose a crazy story of the wildest Wild West has been chosen, and a distinguished set of players has been miscast, apparently to keep the star company. Miss Dietrich plays Frenchy, a dance-hall girl in Bottleneck, " the most lawless town on the whole of the Western Frontier," James Stewart represents Thomas Jefferson Destry, a deputy sheriff who doesn't carry a gun (don't miss the Jefferson—it means that he does much the same cleaning-up manoeuvres around Bottleneck as did Mr. Smith in Washington); then there is Mischa Auer as a " Mos-cowboy " from Russia, and Una Merkel as his wife, and sparring partner for Frenchy. Miss Dietrich, attired as a junior Mae West, is made to sing appalling songs (her voice amplified to terrifying proportions by the microphone), to shout Yippee, to dress up as a cow-girl, and to have an all-in wrestle with Una Merkel. She is finally shot, and dies in James Stewart's arms whispering " kiss me, Tom." Miss Dietrich puts tremendous verve and drive into her performance, but, unfortunately, she is unable to triumph over her material, while James Stewart seems thoroughly at a loss. The idea of reviving the original Dietrich is obviously excellent; that it has proved such a failure is the fault only of bad taste and a poor script.

Like some recurrent disease, the urge to dress its actors in fancy dress and to spend an enormous amount of money, in order to produce an "historical" drama, periodically attacks the film studios. As a result of the most recent bout, Radio Pictures have attired their players in an amazing selection of costumes purporting to be medieval, have given Charles Laughton a hideous make-up, and have produced *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. The production is on the lavish scale of the pre-talkie era, vast crowds swarm over the sets, and Yankee accents echo through the winding streets of an immense cardboard Paris. Familiar faces peep from beneath velvet bonnets; Louis XI is surely nice old Harry Davenport; Clopin, the fierce King of the Beggars is just Thomas Mitchell; and it is useless for that nice English girl Maureen O'Hara to pretend to be Esmeralda, the fiery gipsy wench. Sir Cedric Hardwicke carries momentary conviction as the cruel Chief Justice Frollo, but he is not allowed to do anything but sneer aristocratically. As for Charles Laughton, his make-up undoubtedly gives an unpleasant shock on his first appearance, but as the film progresses and the familiar Laughton begins to appear one longs for Lon Chaney and the silent version. The production is chiefly remarkable as a gala of cruelty: flogging, torture, hanging, and violent death are part of every sequence. The dialogue is practically senseless, and though William Dieterle, the director, should be congratulated on the crowd scenes, one's final impression is—what a waste of money.

After these two misadventures in the realm of imagination, it is refreshing to return to *The 400 Million*, a documentary of the war in China. It is a film of vital interest and infinite pathos, an account of the rebirth of a country in the throes of war, a rebirth of pain, distress and cruelty, but at the same time productive of something really fine. The camera turns occasionally on scenes of unbelievable horror, people torn and mangled by bombings, homes razed to the ground, women racked with grief, yet it has achieved none of its effect by horror alone. The quiet scenes of the Chinese countryside, the peasants, farmers, and students uniting to become a determined army, it is all this that gives the impression of an urgent and conscious achievement brought about by a people united in a common purpose in this war. The film is excellently (and very bravely) photographed by Joris Ivens (who gave us *The Spanish Earth*) and Robert Capa, and there is an excellent restrained commentary well spoken by Frederic March. This picture of a democracy fighting for its life ought to be widely shown at this time; but since it probably will not be, we depend for such films on societies like the London Film Institute whose last Sunday show also included one of Len Lye's ingenious experiments in combining colour and rhythm and a moderate documentary by René Clair. ANTHONY BOWER.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Arts Theatre Club

An agreeable feature of the Arts Theatre Ballet, the second of the amalgamated companies which perform continuously at the Arts Theatre, has been the delightful miniature orchestra of seven instruments to which we drew attention several months ago as an important asset of the Trois Arts Ballet at the Lyric, Hammersmith. The performers are soloists, assembled by the young composer Stanley Bate, who wrote for this ensemble the music of *Perseus*, to John Regan's choreography. The ballet appears to have been withdrawn, but the music was so interesting that one hopes it may be given again. The orchestra is now under the direction of Leighton Lucas, who must be congratulated on his arrangement of Mozart's C Minor Piano Concerto and Bax's "Tintagel" to which Harold Turner composed his ballet *Ann Collin*. It is a pity that the choreographer of *Ann Collin* did not make use of the dramatic material of his version of the ballad. It is as inconceivable in ballet as it would be in drama that the daughter should go off with the false priest under the condoning eye of her father (who, obviously, did not know where to look). Of course, she goes off secretly, and it was a parrot which threatened to give her away. The parrot might also have been used as an element in the decor.

The best dancing of this company was seen in the least ambitious ballet, Keith Lester's reconstruction of the legendary *Pas de Quatre*, produced in 1845 before Queen Victoria, which united the four great ballerinas, Taglioni, Grisi, Grahn and Cerrito. With the help of Mr. Cyril Beaumont the original music by Cesar Pugni was traced in the British Museum, and it has been charmingly orchestrated by Leighton Lucas. The dresses, after Chalon, complete an enchanting picture, and the ballet was delightfully danced by Molly Lake, Diana Gould, Hélène Wolska and Joan Kent. (It is fortunately not so dangerous now as in 1845 to name one ballerina before the other.) The Ballet Rambert, fresh from its Oxford triumph, opens this week with a new ballet by Walter Gore and Stanley Bate, the famous *Lady into Fox* and *Czernyana*.

"Jeannie," at the Torch Theatre

Here is a really fresh and amusing comedy. The story—that of a bullied and repressed household slave who blues her small legacy in a desperate effort to see Continental life, and finally, after many vicissitudes, marries the rightest possible Mr. Right—is an old one; but Miss Aimée Stuart's vigorous authorship and Miss Barbar Mullen's admirable performance in the lead make the play one of the best light entertainments London has seen since the war. *Jeannie* has no pretensions to dramatic unity, but revels unashamedly in a series of bright moments. Mr. Albert Lieven, as an aristocratic gigolo, is the highlight of the evening, perhaps because of his felicitous curtain-line, though Miss Beatrix Fielden Kaye is good as a horrible Scotswoman and Mr. Eric Portman consistently excellent in a somewhat difficult part. Miss Mullen (who is, incidentally, the daughter of the original Man of Aran) deserves the highest praise for her sympathetic pawkiness, and it is difficult to believe that this is her first important part. One imagines that *Jeannie* will be produced in the West End. If it is not, someone will miss a good investment, and the public a pleasant evening.

"Elizabethan Suite," at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith

At the very worst of the cold snap last week, *Les Ballets Trois Arts* had the courage to put on a new ballet. Hammersmith is a far cry at all times, but those who were prepared to brave the rigours of the arctic night (and remembered to keep their overcoats on in the theatre) were rewarded by an unusually delightful

evening. Since the war began, this company has put on twelve new ballets, and the latest, *Elizabethan Suite*, was well up to the standard which their enterprising choreographic director, John Regan, has led balletomanes to expect. To the ear and eye accustomed to the Russian tradition, the music of Byrd, Farnaby and Lawes and the miming technique of the dancers came as a pleasant shock; it was the arms rather than the feet which seemed to control the graceful and flowing patterns of the story. Each successive picture managed to suggest the Elizabethan scene in a peculiarly haunting way, and one could almost imagine the ballet as an interlude in a play by Fletcher or Dekker. Olga Velevska was as satisfying in the part of the Unfaithful Wife as she was during the rest of the programme. Perhaps the most finished artiste at the moment with the company is Maria Sanina, also of the Russian ballet; her *Strauss Waltz* was a joy to watch. In this she had as partner Alexis Rassine, a young South African trained in Paris, who promises to be a really fine dancer.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, February 10th—
- C. A. Radice: "The Federal High Court Is the Keystone of Peace," 26 Grosvenor Place, 2.30.
- "Belinda," 20th Century Theatre, 2.45. In aid of Dick Sheppard Club.
- Russia To-day Dance and Cabaret, Bush House, 8.

SUNDAY, February 11th—
- Dr. C. E. M. Joad: "The Philosophy of Federal Union," Conway Hall, 11. Concert, 3.
- Beecham Sunday Concert, Queen's Hall, 2.45.

MONDAY, February 12th—
- Kingsley Martin: "The Technique of Propaganda," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
- Prof. J. B. S. Haldane: "How the Human Body Works," Marx House, 7.30. And on 4 following Mondays.
- Tracy Phillips: "Ukraine—the Unknown Nation," Trade Union Club, 7.45.
- "Othello," Kingsway.

TUESDAY, February 13th—
- Rev. J. Fraser: "Christian Peace Making," Friends House, 1.20.
- G. Soloveytchik: "The Economic and Social Conditions of the Northern Countries," Canterbury Hall, Cartwright Gardens, W.C.1, 5.
- Dr. H. Mannheim: "The Social Aspects of Crime and Delinquency," I.S.T.D., 8 Portman Street, 6.30.
- Sir John Harris: "War and Peace Aims," Baptist Church Hall, Half Moon Lane, S.E.24, 7.30.
- "On the Run," Lyric.

WEDNESDAY, February 14th—
- Federal Union Lunch Club, Speaker: H. N. Brailsford. The Falstaff, Fleet Street, 1.
- Prof. T. S. R. Boase: "Pictorial Art," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
- R. Wittkower: "Bernini in France," Warburg Inst., 5.
- Raven Thomson: "Fascist Economics," Dick Sheppard Centre, 8.
- Stuart E. Mann: "Czechoslovakia," 4 Nutley Terr., N.W.3, 8.15.

FRIDAY, February 16th—
- Robert Boothby: "Approaches to Peace," Canterbury Hall, 5.
- Dr. H. Pevsner: "Art and the Crusades," Birkbeck College, 5.30.

Correspondence

THE ELECTORAL TRUCE

SIR,—Why is THE NEW STATESMAN, either through the medium of "Critic," or otherwise, constantly nagging at the Labour Party over the by-election truce?

Local elections have been suspended by law. Parliamentary elections have not been thus suspended, and one must assume that the desire of THE NEW STATESMAN (at present—for its policy is subject to a good deal of abrupt variation these days) is that the Labour Party should fight Government candidates as by-elections occur. Very well. The main issue at such by-elections would inevitably be the successful prosecution of the war, and our argument would of necessity be that the Government was inefficient and weak in this respect, and, inferentially, that we could do the job much better. Now the logic of this attitude would surely be that we were prepared to join some Government and thus demonstrate by deeds the truth of our words. But are we prepared to do this? I have not heard so. And is THE NEW STATESMAN in favour of our doing so? If not, why this everlasting nagging and pinpricking?

ERNEST THURTLE

SIR,—For many weeks THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION has been taking the lead in attacking the policy of the Electoral Truce. How is it then that Mr. Kingsley Martin, who, I understand, was adopted some time ago as the Labour Candidate for Cambridge University, is not standing in the by-election?

CAMBRIDGE DEMOCRAT

[Since a number of readers have made similar inquiries, we publish below the letter which Mr. Kingsley Martin has sent to members of the Cambridge University Labour Party. Mr. Kingsley Martin wrote:

"A number of you have written to me expressing the hope that Labour would contest the Cambridge by-Election. The enclosed report of the Meeting of the C.U.L.P. on January 18th, will make it clear that the C.U.L.P. was anxious and ready to contest the seat but reluctantly decided to bow to the decision of the Labour Party Executive to preserve the Electoral Truce.

I regret the Executive's decision for the following reasons. Mr. Attlee has recently stated his emphatic opinion that it was the duty of the Labour Party to work for the defeat of the Chamberlain Government. It is difficult to see how this can be done unless the opposition in the country has an opportunity of expressing itself in favour of an alternative Government. If Labour does not contest seats when it has the opportunity, the electorate will cease to regard it as the potential alternative Government; in many areas, enthusiasm and organisation will dwindle. M.P.s may do excellent work in the House of Commons and address meetings in the country, but only the converted go to meetings and very few people read Hansard. Such technical arguments for the truce as the blackout and the wholesale removal of population from the industrial areas will be just as strong next winter as they are now. If the truce is maintained and the war is of long duration, we shall watch the Labour Party dwindle to a shadow of its former greatness and promise.

Nor is this only a Party plea. Controversy and conflict are the essence of democratic government. If Conservatism is obviously incapable of tackling the difficulties and contradictions which confront us and Socialism no longer offers a living alternative, there will be an increasing tendency in the public to deride all political parties and to support those who advance plausible policies with the real object not of making democracy work but of destroying it. Let us not be deceived by the pretence that because most people feel that the successful prosecution of the war is essential, there is "national unity." There is in fact widespread discontent and suspicion of our present rulers, which may be highly dangerous to democracy, if not canalised by a responsible parliamentary party.

The differences between Socialists and the National Government are fundamental. On innumerable points Socialists criticise the conduct of the war; in particular, they challenge Mr. Chamberlain's complacent assumption that the well-to-do are already paying their share and that the cost of the war must now be met by lowering the standard of living of the working class. On the contrary, we urge the vital importance of maintaining the standard of nutrition and of developing the health, education and other social services, both because we must think of the future and because these are vital even to the immediate object of winning the war.

I believe that Labour has a unique opportunity of exposing the waste, muddle and inequity of much of the Government's organisation and showing that only a Socialist organisation can cope with the present economic problems both in peace and in war. Further, we know that our aims in this war are not those of the present Government. We gladly acknowledge the large measure of free speech and discussion that has so far been maintained in this country during the war, but we wish that freedom was not so much regarded as a home luxury, to be parcelled out in meagre rations to the Empire. In India our statesmen have missed the opportunity that would have done more than anything else to commend our cause to free men. The triumphant answer to the charge that this is an imperialist war would have been the concession to India of the effective reality of self-government to-day, with a plain promise that she shall be a Dominion within a year of the peace. If with this we had included in our war aims, in concert with the French, an offer to abandon all the privileges of monopoly and ownership in our dependent empires, we should have gone far to prove that the Western Civilisation we defend has the courage and sincerity of its values.

Finally, I would urge upon the Labour Party the important task of clarifying the public mind about war aims. While it is desirable carefully to examine and discuss long-distance suggestions for some form of Federal Union (as necessary for a Socialist

as for a Capitalist world), it is also of immediate importance for Britain and France to decide on those minimum terms whose acceptance by Germany might make negotiations possible. Hitler would, no doubt, reject those terms, but that rejection (more especially if the terms were supported by neutral countries, including the U.S.A.) would be the first step towards discrediting the Nazi regime in Germany. Such terms once offered should be repeated constantly by every publicity device available, so that the German people can become aware that only their own rulers stand between them and peace.

All these things have been said by Labour leaders, but Labour should forgo no opportunity of creating out of this programme a challenge to a Government which represents the interests of the past, rather than the hopes of the future."—Ed. N. S. & N.

SCIENCE IN U.S.S.R.

SIR,—Professor Haldane, in his reply to Professor A. V. Hill, has produced a new argument for hushing up evils in the Soviet Union. Denunciation of these, he says, might drag Britain into war with the Union and make British victory less probable. Not feeling entitled to compromise British foreign policy, I would be compelled to silence by this argument, but for the fact that your issue containing his letter also announces that Professor Haldane will assist in a new declaration of the Rights of Man. This subject, I am sure, concerns me, as all other men.

In reply to Professor Haldane I demand, therefore, that he and other politically active Marxist thinkers should make it clear what they know and what they think about the position of the Rights of Man in the Soviet Union, in particular regarding the Freedom of Thought. That before starting to preach the Rights of Man they should first clearly disclose the handling of these rights under a regime with which they are intimately associated. In order to offer an opportunity for this I will repeat here part of a statement which I recently made in a less public form, concerning Freedom of Thought in the U.S.S.R., especially regarding science.

The U.S.S.R. is the one country in the world which is dominated by an elaborate orthodoxy. The writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin are all above criticism. Not only can none of their views be called into question, but any criticism of any detail of the enormous volume of publications by these authors, covering almost all conceivable subjects, would be considered as a counter-revolutionary act, punishable by death. The imposition of Marxism includes the compulsory acceptance of all writers approved by Marx or Engels; on these grounds authors as widely varied as Epicurus, Darwin and Balzac are above criticism. The first because he was favourably discussed in Marx's doctoral dissertation, the latter because Marx praised him in his private correspondence. This reference of Marx to Balzac has actually become the foundation of the literary doctrine of "Socialist Realism" now enforced in the U.S.S.R. "Socialist Realism" and "Soviet Classicism" are examples of modern Marxist doctrines, which are proclaimed from time to time by the party authorities. They are compulsory.

The most important new scientific periodical of the U.S.S.R. which was started early in 1932 (*Zeitschrift für Physik der Sovjetunion*) contains an editorial preface mentioning the application of Dialectical Materialism to physics as one of the purposes of the new journal. Not one in a hundred physicists believed in this nonsense, but no one could dare to contradict the statement publicly. A few months later the Party decided against the continued application in detail of Dialectical Materialism in the exact sciences. A number of essays were then exposed to ridicule by the Party organs. I quote a few of their titles from an account of Sydney and Beatrice Webb in "Soviet Communism," p. 1000: *Marxism and Surgery*, *The Dialectics of Graded Steel*, *The Dialectics of an Internal Combustion Motor*. A *Journal for Marxist-Leninist Natural Science* was published regularly, cultivating such branches of knowledge. Not before this lunacy was eventually abolished by the Party in the fifteenth year of the revolution, could any scientist of the U.S.S.R. raise his voice against it.

Dialectical Materialism remains, of course, beyond criticism in the U.S.S.R. This philosophy, which most scientists do not believe to have much more sense in its general form than in its just quoted special applications current until 1932, is still being thrust down the throat of Soviet scientists, who must not contradict.

It is necessary that the attitude of politically active Marxist scientists with regard to these points should be made known. I demand, in particular, a detailed statement concerning the scientists imprisoned in U.S.S.R., and the circumstances of their imprisonment. This should be accompanied by a precise declaration whether members of the Communist Party in the West are at full liberty to reveal all that they know concerning infringements of the Rights of Man in U.S.S.R.

In writing these lines I am haunted by anxiety. Before me I see the look of terror in the eyes of those whom I met in U.S.S.R., imploring me to remain silent, lest my words be traced back to them and on that track should follow the vengeance of G.P.U. torture in prison. Yet I speak; because I believe that at the present hour of decision truth must be known on this subject. Those terror-stricken eyes should not reproach me, but should haunt the men who have ceaselessly paid homage to their tormentors—and yet who now, in the same breath, would proclaim the Rights of Man?

M. POLANYI

30 Sandileigh Avenue, Manchester.

SIR,—As Professor A. V. Hill's recent letter in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION on this subject will probably be quoted as authoritative on account of the eminence of its author, it is necessary to examine dispassionately some of its statements. There are some things which I have no intention of defending, e.g. the uninhibited language employed by editors of Soviet scientific or other journals, or the isolation of Soviet scientists from their colleagues in the West over a long period of years. Nor need any reference be made to the now well-known genetics controversy, since Professor J. B. S. Haldane has already discussed this in your columns. I may say in passing, however, with regard to Professor Hill's statement that Soviet laboratories are starved of literature, that my own personal experience has been the contrary; in biological and biochemical laboratories which I have visited I found as rich a supply of the important scientific journals of the world as in comparable institutions in this and other Western countries.

The non-participation of the Soviet physiologists in the Sixteenth International Congress of Physiology at Zürich in the summer of 1938 is a serious matter. Like Professor Hill, I attended both the Moscow and the Zürich Congresses, and like him I deplored the absence of our Russian colleagues on the latter occasion. But this absence was capable of other interpretations than that adopted by Professor Hill. In the summer of 1938 wars were raging in several parts of the world. In retaining Soviet physiologists at home, the Soviet Government, though possibly misguided, may have been motivated by need for their services or care for their safety in the event of war, rather than, as Professor Hill prefers to assume, by indifference towards international science.

But I would rather confine my remarks to subjects of which I have personal knowledge. Let us examine more closely Professor Hill's statements about "mitogenetic rays," which he refers to as an "imposing stunt kept up under official encouragement," and upon which rests the main burden of his proposition that "in many fields the claims for Russian science are fraudulent." Like Professor Hill, I have never been a believer in the existence of these rays, but I have had occasion to go into the literature on them from time to time, and I cannot accept his version of the facts. In the first place, the original experiments were those of A. Gurwitsch, a biologist who held for many years (and, I believe, still holds) a chair at the University of Moscow. Here at once is something that does not fit in with Professor Hill's picture, for Gurwitsch has always been a professed vitalist (as his many books and papers show, from his "Practical Vitalism" in the *American Naturalist* for 1915 onwards), hence diametrically opposed to the dominant philosophy in Russia. Yet Soviet intolerance did not deprive him of his position, or make him "conform to the standard pattern." Now although the literature on mitogenetic rays originated in the Soviet Union, the Western European literature later became full of papers on the subject. The authoritative review of Dr. J. B. Bateman (one of Professor Hill's own pupils; in *Biol. Rev.* vol. 10) bears witness to this, for while I find in his bibliography 74 papers from Russian workers, there are 94 from German, 19 from Italian, and 13 from French sources. Many of the non-Russian authors decided in favour of the existence of the "rays." No one will take seriously the suggestion that the Soviet Government subsidised research on this subject in Western European countries in order to "keep up an imposing stunt," especially as the evidence in favour of the rays was to critical minds at no time very imposing. Furthermore, if conditions in the Soviet Union were as Professor Hill wishes us to believe, we should not expect to find thorough-going opponents and critics of mito-

genetic rays there. Yet although the "rays" were finally exploded by Richards and Taylor in America, by Gray and Oeillet in England, some of the earliest and most searching criticism came from a Soviet investigator, M. Moissejeva of Kiev.

Professor Hill states that "few people outside Russia trouble to read the products" of Russian research. Here again I wish only to speak of what I know. The subject of Experimental Morphology and Embryology, was formerly almost entirely German and American. Since 1933, most of the leading German investigators have gone into exile or ceased work, but the task has been brilliantly taken up by Soviet biologists, as the names of Balinsky, Filatov, Koltzov, Lopaschov, Liosner, Polezaiev, Schmalhausen, Popov, Schmidt, Schaxel, and Umanski, sufficiently testify.

Ultimately I suspect that what Professor Hill objects to in the Soviet Union, apart from crudity of language, is the definite connection which exists there between natural science and a certain philosophy, the philosophy of dialectical materialism. But this can hardly be because he objects to a connection between science and philosophy as such, for I know of no public utterances on his part deploring the association with idealist philosophy which men such as Professor Sir A. S. Eddington and Sir James Jeans have built up in this country. And if Professor Hill should reply that the man of science ought to have no philosophy at all, the answer is that this is impossible.

It is, of course, quite open to Professor Hill to dislike the philosophy on which the Soviet Union is built. But that its connection there with science is not fortuitous, arises from the fact that it claims to be an analysis of how natural transformations occur; and its socialism was called by its founders "scientific," because it was based upon our scientific knowledge of the processes in biological and social evolution which have led to man's present estate, and will necessitate his future union. And it is fair to say that there is a great and growing body of opinion in the intellectual life of this country which sees in the marxist world-outlook the only approach to a satisfactory philosophy of history, and the only real alternative to the "miraculous" view of the history of science. It was partly stimulated by the "bores" of the International History of Science Congress which met in London in 1931. It is winning the appreciation of some of our most profound students of the philosophy of history, such as Professor R. G. Collingwood, as his recent interesting autobiography shows. And it will be built into the structure of human thought for many centuries after our little controversies of to-day are long forgotten.

Caius College, JOSEPH NEEDHAM
Cambridge.

SIR,—I have just read Professor A. V. Hill's two columns of declamation against Soviet Science. I can only judge of Professor Hill's prejudices in one particular. I met Kapitza in Moscow and spent many hours with him last July. If he was "kidnapped" from Cambridge I am quite sure he is not aware of it. He is more confident and contented with his work than any Cambridge Professor I ever met. He has an honoured position, and all the resources necessary for his work are supplied without stint or question by the Government.

He has the most friendly feelings towards Cambridge. But they are tempered by an amused and understanding tolerance for the attitude of the British intelligentsia towards economics and society. It was clear to me that nothing would induce Kapitza to return to England in permanence.

Wallington, Cambo, CHARLES TREVELYAN
Morpeth.

CONDITIONS IN FRANCE

SIR,—It is rather belatedly that I am moved to clear up the false impression your correspondent Mr. Kamnitzer might have made two weeks ago. From the letter he quotes I suppose that mixed concentration camps were meant.

I am an Austrian. My brother spent last September and October in a concentration camp and then joined the French Foreign Legion. The conditions in the camp were just as Mr. Kamnitzer's letter describes them, but from sheer inactivity my brother managed to put on weight. There were no women in the camp. During the whole time, from the beginning of the war until now I have never been molested except for an occasional visit from a polite plain-clothes man to ascertain my residence and to see that my papers are in order. An Austrian friend of ours is in a camp for foreign workers, but his wife, a Hungarian, is allowed to remain at her customary residence.

Thinking that perhaps we are privileged exceptions I inquired at the Austrian Committee for aid to refugees and was told that there does indeed exist one concentration camp for such Austrian and German women as had been too often seen in company of French officers and so might be guilty of espionage; no others.

As for the men there is no reason, apart from the first two months of disorganisation to which my brother's detention must be ascribed (he volunteered for service immediately at the outbreak of the hostilities), why they should be kept in camps if they are willing to join the Foreign Legion. The truth is that most of the Central European Jewish refugees are averse to military service and the authorities simply don't know what to do with them. Why indeed should they alone, of a whole nation at war, be exempted? (In case I sound smug and self-righteous let me add that I am not here talking of general moral issues but of the particular case of refugees. I abhor war and race prejudice.) My brother told me that, at the camp, worse than all the physical hardships, were the atmosphere of constant suspicion, the bickering, cheating and quarrelling among the prisoners themselves. No comradeship, such as would have made their mutual miseries easier to bear was possible. GÎTA MANDL

SIR,—I am sorry to see that in his reply, instead of adding to the information on democracy in France, Mr. Werth has contented himself with a series of generalities, half-truths and attacks on the Communists. To deal with his question on the death sentences in the Army. I could give the names and the regiments of those Communists executed. At least one of the widows is living in Paris. To do so, however, would not only cause trouble for them, but as your readers will understand, might be the means of betraying those Communists who continue.

Instances are, however, not lacking. A few weeks ago two young workers named Pimbaud and Réné Georges were arrested in Paris. They were former members of the International Brigade in Spain and both had been wounded. Immediately upon arrest they were beaten up in an attempt to obtain confessions. This treatment was later repeated.

In the thirteenth Paris arrondisement a 60-year-old Post Office worker was arrested recently. Released a few days later, he re-

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turned home to find that his wife had committed suicide together with his daughter, terrorised by the police. In another instance the police raided the house of a Paris worker. Not finding him there, they arrested his wife and their 6-year-old daughter. Nothing has been heard of either of them since.

This week I learn that the first departure has taken place of French Communists, among them many wounded Spanish volunteers, to exile in the camps set up in Madagascar, Indo-China and French Equatorial Africa. Mr. Werth may say that they deserve what they are getting, and that a Party which gave 4,000 of its members to the cause of Spanish democracy should be dealt with thus.

The last point I wish to make is of a practical nature and of immediate urgency. It is to be feared that the conversion of the French Chamber of Deputies into a second Reichstag is but the first step in the direction of the most ferocious repression not only of Communists but of the left-wing in general in France. Already *Le Temps* has sounded the alarm even against the milk-and-water Trade Unionism of Léon Jouhaux, Belin and Co. With only the flimsiest " evidence " of the charges of " espionage, high treason and intelligence with the enemy," that have unofficially been brought against the Communist deputies now in prison, it is possible and indeed probable that an attempt will be made to get a trial *à huis clos*. Already as a result of the activity of certain readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, and let it be said of readers of the *Daily Worker*, something has been achieved. The Ministry of Justice has been obliged to order the *mise en liberté provisoire* of three of the war-wounded Deputies. They are Felix Brun, who has nothing but the stumps of his two legs, Jean Duclos, almost totally blind, and Dadot. G. L.

Paris.

THE AUSTRIA OFFICE

SIR,—In your last issue " Polycritic " refers to the Austria Office as a mysterious organisation, disowned by the Austrian Socialists and so constituted that " Schuschniggites " and Monarchists predominate; he also suggests that the Austria Office stands for the re-establishment of the *ancien régime*.

" Polycritic " is misinformed. The Austria Office has clearly stated that it aims at supporting the fight of Anti-Nazi Austrians for the restitution of democracy in Austria (as published in the *News Chronicle*, *Manchester Guardian*, etc.). It has never claimed to represent the Austrian people; what it wishes to do is to make such representation once more possible. Nor do " the " Austrian Socialists dissociate themselves from the Austria Office; the Revolutionary Socialists who incline to the extreme Left, will not co-operate, but the Chairman of the Association of Austrian Social Democrats in England is one of the chief Executives of the Austria Office, with the full approval of his organisation.

" Polycritic " is right in implying that the Austria Office is supported by Monarchists as well as Social Democrats. This fact is indicative of an important political development—the acceptance by different political groups of an immediate programme which enables them to co-operate in the fight against Hitler. The question of Monarchist predominance does not arise; Monarchist propaganda is not only " frowned upon," as " Polycritic " states, but is excluded from the immediate programme together with any other such issue which must be decided by the Austrian people after their liberation.

The formation of the Austria Office was furiously attacked by the Nazis who recognised it as a sign of that union of Austrian forces which they feared and struck at in March, 1938. An attack from that source is not surprising, but a different attitude on the part of British democrats might have been expected.

9 Eaton Place, S.W.1. ALEXIS DE VIVENOT,
Secretary, Austria Office

[The only Austrian Socialist Party recognised by the Labour and Socialist International is the Austrian Revolutionary Socialists. The Association of Social Democrats, to which M. de Vivenot refers, was only formed a few days ago. The approval of the Chairman's participation in the work of the Austria Office was given, we understand, by about forty people.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

"BLEST PAIR"

SIR,—I regret the necessity for troubling you further, but you must allow me to correct a statement in a certain letter (published by you in your issue of to-day, February 3rd) to " a guest " of the El Morocco Club. This Club, it is stated, is holding what is called a " Strip Tease " Competition to discover " who is London's most beautiful girl." The Club members are to decide, and this having been done, " the winner will be painted full-length nude by Mr. A. K. Lawrence, R.A." Ungrateful though it may appear (in view of the extremely generous praise accorded my abilities by the writer, who describes me in terms I am not vain enough to repeat), I must point out that this is not correct, and ask you to be so kind as to publish this letter. And you must, I think, allow me to add that were this true, I should still fail to see what this has to do with the Royal Academy, the article by Mr. Clive Bell, or Mr. Munnings' reply, or my letter which you publish to-day. Inquiry at the El Morocco Club might reveal that I had asked one of the very beautiful dancers now appearing there to sit to me; and the fact that painters do sometimes discover the most superb models in this way may, or may not, be of interest to your readers, but those who have followed this correspondence will surely wonder at your statement suggesting it is relevant to the theme we have been discussing.

A. K. LAWRENCE

DR. JOHNSON

SIR,—I wondered whether in the entries for Competition 517 anyone would produce the saying of Dr. Johnson which occurred in a dream of Sir James Murray himself. I myself heard it by word of mouth from my father, who himself, I believe, had heard it from Dr. Murray.

While still in the middle of the compilation of the Dictionary, Dr. Murray dreamed that he was reading a hitherto unknown passage of Boswell. Dr. Johnson had been discoursing as usual on his objection to Scotchmen and to Presbyterians, and his satisfaction on having completed his Dictionary without endowment.

. . . Wishing to make an experiment with the sage, I asked him, " What would you say, Sir, if the next great Dictionary of the English tongue were to be compiled by a Scotchman and a Presbyterian, at the expense of the University of Oxford? "

" Sir," said Johnson, striking with the flat of his hand on the table, " to be facetious it is not necessary to be indecent! "

8 Hernes Road, Oxford. M. SNOW

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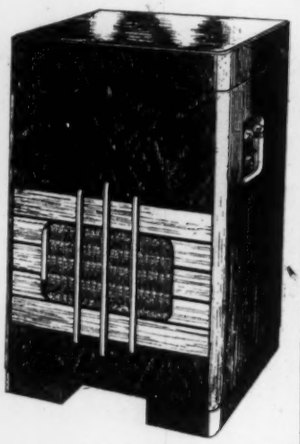

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Current Literature

THE MAKING OF KNOWLEDGE

Rutherford: Being the Life and letters of the Rt. Hon. Lord Rutherford, O.M. By A. S. EVE. *Cambridge.* 21s.
Albert Einstein. By H. GORDON GAIBEDIAN. *Cassell.* 12s. 6d.
Matter and Light. By LOUIS DE BROGLIE. *Allen and Unwin.* 12s. 6d.
The Philosophy of Physical Science. By SIR A. EDDINGTON. *Cambridge.* 8s. 6d.

One of the major paradoxes of our age is that it has witnessed both the most futile barbarity and stupidity in human action and the greatest and most beautiful clarification of human knowledge. Yet both are products of the same social forces, and, however different, both have a decisive part to play in the development of the future. These four books give us an interesting cross-section of the greatest revolution that physical science has ever undergone. In Rutherford and Einstein we have two of the men most responsible for that revolution; their work, very different in character, the one intensely practical, the other moving in the highest realms of theory, were both necessary for its development. The two men were as different in their character and circumstances as in their scientific outlook. Rutherford, the bluff, vigorous colonial, moved with easy success in a society that accepted him and which he accepted equally uncritically. Einstein, sensitive, excitable, a Jew, always aware of the horrors of war and political persecution, was to be finally driven into exile. It was only towards the end of his life that the unpleasant realities of the contemporary world were borne on Rutherford, precisely on account of his championship of the cause of persecuted scientists in other countries.

The beauty of Rutherford's work always lay in its directness and simplicity. He possessed the highest degree of concrete imagination. As an experimental investigator unequalled, except possibly by Faraday, he combined a close attention to the actual matter under observation with definite visual and almost tactual images of its underlying mechanism. He was born in a fortunate time, scientifically as much as socially. The ice that had covered the complacency of Victorian field physics had been broken by Röntgen's discovery of X-rays and Becquerel's discovery of radioactivity. Rutherford was to be the first man to map the new world thus revealed; the fact that it lay outside the normal conception of physics inspired rather than deterred him. He developed his own picture of atomic transformation constructively out of his experiments. That would have been enough work for a great physicist, but for Rutherford it was only the beginning. He found how to use the α particles derived from radioactive changes as probes of the structure of the atom itself. At a time when that structure was a matter of wild speculation, he found the key in one short set of experiments and showed how all atoms are composed of a central heavy core and a cloud of electrons. The derivation of the laws that these electrons follow was left to more theoretical minds, particularly to the magnificent guess of Bohr. Rutherford will be known to all posterity as the discoverer of the structure of the atom. In his latter years he went farther still and by means of atomic disintegration initiated the study of the internal structure of that nucleus which he himself was the first to discover. Perhaps even more than in his work his influence will be felt in the school of physicists which he founded and inspired.

Einstein's contribution was not to discover the unsuspected structure of matter, but to reinterpret methods of understanding it in such a way as to make comprehensible and calculable relationships between quantities hitherto considered of entirely different natures. Rutherford and his school added to the multiplicity of nature by the discovery of one new particle after another, Einstein added to its unity in his great synthesis of mass, light, and energy. There is in no sense conflict between these two achievements, but rather a necessary complementary relation. The two lives that are here presented differ in their character almost as much as in their subjects. Professor Eve has written, one may think, the kind of life of Rutherford that he would himself have liked, very simple, unassuming, almost prosaic in its understatement of his achievements. Much is in the form of Rutherford's own letters. The letters themselves are only revealing in a negative way. The poetry and imagination of Rutherford was implicit in his work, his letters show a simple, balanced and happy man occupied with very ordinary things, his prospects, his family, his college, his golf, his pipe. What it lacks is probably not to be had in our time, a real appreciation of the magnitude of his work in relation to the intellectual and social development of his age. Rutherford's is a figure that will grow in importance in the history of science, and it is good to have here a solid first appreciation of the man by one who knew him in his early days.

The biographer of Einstein on the other hand adopts a rhapsodic and almost hysterical tone in describing the indescribable mental processes of his hero. It cannot honestly be said to do him justice. But it is very natural that, caught by admiration for one of the greatest minds of recent times, Mr. Gaibedian should allow himself to be carried away by enthusiasm. And this very tone may also be a useful one to reflect the strains and exaltations of life in post-war and pre-Nazi Germany. For Einstein was never so abstracted in his work as to forget the struggles of those times. His work for peace and for the Jewish people were as much a part of him as the theory of relativity. Unfortunately, the dynamics of human society are far more difficult than the most difficult part of mathematical physics.

The quantum theory in the hands of Bohr proved the key to unlock many of the secrets of the atom, the spectra, the periodic table, but it became apparent by 1925 that the theory failed to account for many other properties, such as chemical combination, and that it had to be modified in an entirely arbitrary way if it was to fit even the spectral facts. The first break in this impasse came from de Broglie in his brilliant analogy between the waves of light and the particles of matter. The physics of the nineteenth century had been amply satisfied to think of matter as composed of particles and light of waves, but it became apparent in the early twentieth century that light in many ways, particularly in the photoelectric effect, behaved as particles rather like those foreshadowed by Newton as subject to recurrent fits. Nevertheless, it could not be disputed that light still possessed wave-like properties. Broglie was the first to dare to suggest that matter might also be wave-like. In this he was going back to the controversies of the eighteenth century and particularly to the principle of that Maupertuis who was the butt of Voltaire in Berlin. There could hardly be a better example of the dialectical development in science than this swing from wave to particles and back again to something which is both wave and particle and more than both. The wave electron was developed in the hands of Schrödinger to provide the needed improvement in Bohr's theory and was demonstrated experimentally in the diffraction of electrons by Davison and Germer. *Matter and Light* contains, translated for the first time into English, a series of lectures in which these ideas are lucidly treated. Most of them refer to the time at which the discovery was made and their special value is in recreating the atmosphere of the fundamental novelty of this discovery.

Inevitably the great physical revolution of our time must affect our philosophical views, but it is still too early to expect that revision to be really effective. The professional philosophers do not yet understand the physical revolution and the few physicists who do are either men like Rutherford with a hearty distrust of philosophy—"don't let me catch anyone talking about the universe in my laboratory"—or they are thoroughly steeped in older metaphysical idealism. Of the latter, Eddington is far the most remarkable figure and his latest book is likely to mark, both for those who agree with it and those who do not, a definite step in the development of the philosophy of physics. Though written with the charming simplicity and mastery of English that are characteristic of him, this is not an easy book because in it Eddington is striving to express a revaluation of ideas much more extreme than anything he has previously put forward. His argument is a plea for epistemology or the value of studying our knowledge of things because we are in no position to study the things themselves. He appears to guard himself against complete subjectivism by claiming that he is only maintaining the subjectiveness of physical laws:

> I have often found an impression that to explain away the laws of nature as wholly subjective is the same thing as to explain away the physical universe as wholly subjective. Such a view is altogether unfounded.

This proviso is, however, of little value because to Eddington practically everything in the physical universe with the exception of consciousness is covered by the laws of physics, all the stars, the earth, and even a great deal of living matter comes under this category. Eddington's views differ from those of most subjectivists in that they are based on his own work of interpretation

of physical laws. He shows convincingly that if people had thought more clearly about what they were observing and measuring, they would have seen that many of their measurements were unnecessary or meaningless; and from that he goes to the other extreme and almost implies that taking thought is all that is necessary. Old Franklin deduced from experiments with glass rods and sealing wax that electricities of the same sign repel and of different signs attract each other. This repulsion is due, according to Eddington, to the necessary impossibility of distinguishing between identical particles, and the attraction to the necessary complementary character of absences and presences. The question that insistently puts itself is why Franklin had to precede Eddington and not *vice versa*. The answer might be that Eddington did in fact precede Franklin, only it was another Eddington arguing equally satisfactorily of the self-evident necessity of the Trinity. The Eddington of our times has more to go on and his speculations can be made to fit into a coherent and ever-growing body of experimental evidence, even if he believes that those experiments may be quite useless. Eddington's claims appear to outsiders as of two kinds, though to him they are all one. The first is the theoretical explanation of certain relations between physical quantities, for instance, the relation of the masses of the electrons of the hydrogen atom. The second, though it is derived in the same way, is the surprising statement:

> I believe there are 15,747,724,136,275,002,577,605,653,961,181,555,468,044,717,914,527,116,709,366,231,425,076,185,631,031,296 protons in the universe, and the same number of electrons.

Not that he believes that they can be counted. In fact, paradoxically, if they could be counted it would be possible to prove that his theory was wrong. This kind of statement is tantamount to saying that not only do we know the laws of the universe, but we could know what is in the universe by pure thought. He even goes so far as to say:

> All the laws of nature that are usually classed as fundamental can be foreseen wholly from epistemological considerations. They correspond to a priori knowledge, and are therefore *wholly* subjective.

What then is not subjective? Curiously enough, it is human consciousness. Eddington arrives from precisely the opposite pole of idealism at the same difficulty which faced the crude materialism of Descartes. Rather oddly he tries to get out of this difficulty in the same childish way as Descartes did, and before him Democritus, by forming some little link, the pineal gland or atomic bias, joining these two incompatible worlds:

> There is in a human being some portion of the brain, perhaps a mere speck of brain-matter, perhaps an extensive region, in which the physical effects of his volitions begin, and from which they are propagated to the nerves and muscles which translate the volition into action. We will call this portion of the brain-matter "conscious matter." . . .
>
> Accordingly the distinction between ordinary matter and conscious matter is that in ordinary matter there is no correlation in the undetermined parts of the behaviours of the particles, whereas in conscious matter correlation may occur.

It is at first sight curious that he does not see how this jump vitiates the whole argument about the chance nature of the physical universe and that he fails to extend the idea of organisation which he uses to the full in quantum physics to produce the really new characters of life on one level, and social consciousness on another. As a physicist we should not, of course, expect Eddington to give a rational account of biology or psychology, but as a philosopher he cannot escape if his system fails to take in these important aspects of the total universe. That the very deep thought which is everywhere apparent in Eddington's work should be incapable of providing this coherence is an indication of the fundamental impossibility of building partial philosophies. This is Bacon's Idol of the Cave all over again. Nevertheless, concepts derived in these partial philosophies will have to be used even if they must be inverted in building up a dynamic and comprehensive philosophy which takes into account both the material universe and its transformations.

J. D. BERNAL

NEW NOVELS

The Love Story of Gilbert Bright. By FRANK TILSLEY. *Collins.* 8*s.* 3*d.*

Peace, It's Wonderful. By WILLIAM SAROYAN. *Faber.* 8*s.* 3*d.*

Visions of Contempt. By GEORGE BORODIN. *Hutchinson* 8*s.* 3*d.*

Giuliano the Magnificent. ANONYMOUS, edited by JACK LINDSAY. *Dakers.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Cheap Glory. By THOMAS PHILLIPS. *Harrap.* 8*s.* 3*d.*

It is a dangerous thing for a writer to depart from the style and subject by which he has established his reputation. "Straight" novelists—that is, those who express in their books the interests and experiences of their own lives—have no need to desire a change, and any excursion they may make into an alien field is merely a pleasant experiment. The literary specialist, the professional exploiter of a particular kind of fiction, is in a very different position. He has made his name and his income as the purveyor of a special sort of entertainment, and woe to him should he attempt unsuccessfully to become a serious writer. The humorist, the tough, the inventor of thrillers can gain a faithful and profitable public far more easily than can the straight novelist, but he must, in return, supply his regular readers with the fodder they expect. Mark Twain and Dickens could never escape from the endless repetition of their own successes: it is easier for a poet to forsake his favourite metre than for a novelist to abandon his tried and triumphant métier.

The Love Story of Gilbert Bright shows that one at least of our ruthless young satirists has the courage to leave his speciality and be himself. Mr. Tilsley has made his name as the reporter of the suburban upper-proletariat, the sub-civilisation of the drab and pathetic multitudes whose god is the super-cinema and labour-saving scullery, and whose Nemesis the recurring instalment and the inescapable pressure of an incomprehensible economic system. The author himself has usually remained detached from his wretched puppets, and chronicled their dismal odysseys with the abstracted curiosity of a mass-observing ichthyologist in an aquarium. His present novel shows a new development, for it is passionately personal, and in part, apparently, autobiographical. Briefly, it is the story of a great artist as seen by his young son, and later, a simple statement of the son's early emotional experiences. The father's artistic talents are but lightly indicated—we learn only that he is good at nudes, portraits, landscapes and caricatures, can paint a group of Chelsea pensioners that becomes an Academy sensation, and ends by making nearly as much money as John—but we are, nevertheless, persuaded that he is an indubitable genius who might well inspire his son with a lasting

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hero-worship. To carry conviction on such a point is a considerable literary feat, which Mr. Tilsley achieves by his fine characterisation of the boy who narrates the story. The first part of the novel, indeed, is one of the best childhood studies I remember, and although adolescence and young love are not so well done, the book as a whole gives a lively and credible portrait of a sensitive child. *The Love Story of Gilbert Bright* must possess outstanding merits, since one continues to admire it in spite of its lamentable faults. Mr. Tilsley seems to have used his book to vent a number of early repressions, since not only is there an encounter with that perennial figment of youthful wish-fulfilment, the passionate yet maternal young woman of extraordinary wit, soul and beauty who picks you up in a museum, leads you to her studio, tactfully seduces herself for you, says "I'm so lonely; these last few months I've ached with my loneliness" a few minutes after the first meeting, and "You poor, desperate, hurt, thwarted, angry, hopeless man" an hour later at the consummation; but also a stupidly melodramatic dénouement that might have come straight from a Freudian dream-book and almost succeeds retrospectively in spoiling the novel. But such passages, irritating though they be, are merely incidental to a distinctive novel. Mr. Tilsley can be diffuse, careless (he absent-mindedly repeats the same incident in different contexts), and sentimental, but he is also fresh and sincere, with a keen observation that gives an originality to the most hackneyed of situations. By itself, this would be an unusual and promising book: in conjunction with its author's previous work it is something of a miracle.

Mr. Saroyan still clings firmly to his last. *Peace, It's Wonderful* is a collection of his amusing and characteristic stories about drunks, punks, oddities and ordinary little people touched for an instant with local but astonishing madness, and has a fair measure of the sudden and freakish imagination that distinguished *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze*. Mr. Saroyan is as adept at trick psychology as was O. Henry at tricks of situation, and even the slightest of these incidents are worth reading for the jack-in-the-box surprises that they usually contain. All the same, Mr. Saroyan is approaching that dangerous moment for the eccentric writer when originality may slip into habit and self-confidence into conceit. It may be fanciful to detect in his latest book a certain falling-off, a barely perceptible tendency to force the imagination, but it is, unfortunately, quite clear that he is getting rather too high an opinion of his own abilities. Several of the tales are devoted to stating that Mr. William Saroyan, called by that name, is a "great writer," inspired by a daemon, who "knows all things. His knowing is sharp and swift and to the dead centre of it all"; and in different places it is suggested that the book is (*a*) a blow for the oppressed individuals of the world, and (*b*) a manifesto that all life is death and nothingness. This is clearly very dangerous. It is said that every comedian wishes to play Hamlet, and, if he has the talent, there is no reason why he should not do so. When, however, he begins to imagine that his rendering of the Grave Digger expresses in itself all the passion and introspection of the Prince of Denmark, it is time to leave the theatre. I look forward to Mr. Saroyan's next book with interest and a little apprehension.

Visions of Contempt is promisingly described as the life-story of a psycho-analyst, and one had hopes that here at last was that long-awaited adventure-story, *Through Darkest Libido: My Life Amongst the Untamed Neuroses*. Unfortunately, though Mr. Borodin's book recounts many adventures, they are all on the physical plane; and though the psychologist hero is reared in peasant squalor, endures ludicrous but very real sufferings in a Bulgarian Naval Academy, is all but shot in a *coup d'état*, and ends by losing his memory, his psyche remains resolutely unaffected. Parts of the novel are excellent reading. Mr. Borodin's autobiography, *Street of a Thousand Misters*, described extraordinary youthful vicissitudes, and it is clear that he is drawing on personal experience for most of the Bulgarian incidents. *Visions of Contempt* is not as unusual as its slightly pretentious sub-title would suggest, and the hero shows too little capacity for introspection to persuade us that he would make a good psycho-analyst. But Mr. Borodin, whatever his defects as an analytical novelist, is a good reporter, and his pictures of Bulgarian village life are vivid and grotesque enough to give his book a considerable entertainment value.

Giuliano the Magnificent, which, according to the publishers, is the most remarkable novel for many years, was written under peculiar circumstances. "At the beginning of 1933 Miss Dorothy Johnson, a woman in her forties, a former schoolmistress and a writer of fiction, was living alone in Bloomsbury and making her first attempt at a historical novel. Suddenly she entered into a mental experience which she cannot adequately describe, in which Lorenzo de' Medici revealed to her the inmost truth about himself and his brother Giuliano. Miss Johnson "collaborated with Lorenzo" in a drama 360,000 words long, later condensed by Mr. Lindsay. "No amount of historical research," declare the publishers, "could possibly have provided the material for this novel," and when we read that Giuliano was so saintly that, in spite of his brilliant mind and unique opportunities for investigation, he remained totally ignorant of the facts of life until his twenties, we must perforce agree. Such a book cannot be judged by ordinary critical standards, so it seems fairest to quote from its advertisements: "This novel had to be reprinted before publication. It pictures the colourful pageantry of the Florentine heyday. Giuliano is portrayed as the purest and knightliest spirit since King Arthur. It records the loveliest relationship between brothers in history. The style is masculine, forceful and beautiful. It contains a unique, almost incredible love affair presented without servility to convention. It has 456 large pages, all equally readable." This is not quite true, for p. 456 is more readable than the others, being several lines shorter.

Cheap Glory is a novel about an illiterate heavyweight champion, told in the first person by the heavyweight himself. In spite of the inhibition of subtlety such a device involves, Mr. Phillips has succeeded in making his hero's medical, marital and financial troubles interesting and occasionally moving. This is not, except when describing action, a book at all easy to read, but the author reveals, beneath his ill-chosen technique, a certain literary flair. He could, and probably will, write a great deal better.

JOHN MAIR

THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of England from Queen Victoria to George VI. By A. B. KEITH. *Macmillan.* Two Vols. 30s.

Professor Keith is at once a prodigious and prolific worker; and his learning is as remarkable as it is wide. One of our foremost Sanskrit scholars, he is also an expert of high distinction upon imperial and constitutional questions, who brings to their interpretation not only the lawyer's technique, but also the wide experience of one who was an official of eminence in the Colonial Office. His new work is clearly destined to take its place among the best we have upon its subject. It is written with great clarity, with a full knowledge of the material, and with a sense of the delicate problems involved that deserves high praise. Not since President Lowell wrote his *Government of England*, over thirty years ago, have we had so clear or so comprehensive a survey; and where Professor Keith covers the same ground as his predecessor, he clearly makes the earlier volumes superfluous. It is, perhaps, a matter for regret that Professor Keith did not deal, if not with local government as a whole, at least with the relation in principle between Whitehall and the local authorities; had he done so, his book would have stood out as by all odds the best existing treatise on the working of our constitution. But, in its field, there is no other book of comparable importance. It is a magistral analysis which will not only be quite indispensable to the student, but is always of the highest interest to the general reader.

Its spirit is that of an advanced radical, aware of the fragility of all constitutional schemes, and anxious, perhaps rightly anxious, that the abyss between parties shall never be so wide as to threaten the continuity of their development. That, perhaps, explains why Professor Keith still clings to what is, I think, his quite indefensible notion of the King as the "guardian of the Constitution"; he does not seriously grapple with the difficulty that if the King were to exercise his guardianship, he could not maintain that neutrality that is of the essence of his position. Professor Keith still stands by Professor Dicey's intepretation of the rule of law; here, I think, he has hardly given due weight to the powerful armoury of criticism Dr. Jennings has assembled against it—an armoury, it should be added, that has even penetrated the defences of the academic lawyers. It is good to see him protesting against the growing tendency of the power to dissolve being accumulated in the Prime Minister's personal hands; that is, I think, an authority that should never be exercised except as fully shared with the Cabinet. He writes with pungency and force on the various schemes of devolution; and it is good to have an authority of his distinction emphasise the

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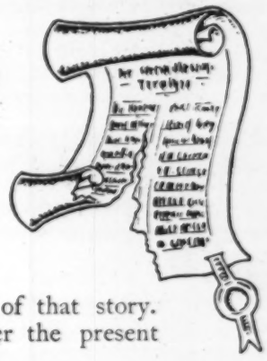

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fallacies of the idea of an Economic General Staff. It is good, also, to see him come out strongly for a Ministry of Justice.

Professor Keith can fairly claim that his book is written with complete detachment from the views of any party. But he is—it is part of his strength—a man of vehement opinions, and he does not always establish his point by a contemptuous dismissal of judgments he does not share. His defence, for example, of the illegality of the General Strike would have gained from an attempt to answer the careful argument of Professor Goodhart, whose learned orthodoxy is not in dispute. His remarks on the Labour Party's scheme for old-age pensions hardly suggests that he can have given due care to the very full financial analysis which accompanied its publication. His description of the advisory committees on the Justices of the Peace would hardly leave the reader realising that their main function, unsuccessfully performed, is to maintain a reasonable balance between political parties on the Bench. I know of no evidence to suggest that the *Codex Sinaiticus* was purchased on political grounds; it was rather a typical piece of cultural emotionalism in which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Scottish caution was outbalanced by his Puritan memories. His comments on the Arab-Jewish difficulties in Palestine are unfortunate in their temper; and there is one remark on this subject in the preface which, on a re-reading, I think Professor Keith would himself wish to delete. Many of his criticisms of the Civil Service are both apt and important; but I do not think it is fair to suggest that their propensity to publish books is a proof that their ordinary labours do not fully occupy their minds; it is worth remembering that Trollope's vast literary labours did not prevent him from being a most efficient Civil Servant. I do not, finally, feel that Professor Keith is wholly fair to Mr. Chamberlain in the context of foreign policy. I agree with him that Munich was both a betrayal and a disaster; but the responsibility for the encroachment of the Prime Minister on the sphere of Lord Halifax is as much the latter's as the former's. If Mr. Chamberlain had an excessive influence, that was, not least, because Lord Halifax acquiesced in his exercise of it.

HAROLD J. LASKI

ELIA AFLOAT

On Sailing the Sea. A COLLECTION OF THE SEAGOING WRITINGS OF HILAIRE BELLOC. Selected by W. N. ROUGHEAD. *Methuen.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

There is no hermitage in the modern world so isolated as to be alone in a small craft at sea. If the weather is foul, nothing but the man and the storm exists. If the weather is fair and the passage long, the wind too light and chancy to set the helm and let the ship sail herself, so that he is kept gently managing the tiller incessantly for sixteen-hour stretches, the man is cut off from the world in another way. His body is sufficient to sail the boat, and his mind indulges more freely in reverie than it ever can on land.

I enjoyed a retreat of this sort in the last few weeks of peace. I was sailing alone a 24-ft. cutter, from one little harbour in the Bristol Channel to another in North Wales under the shadow of the mountains.

I never saw Nature more beautiful: and, as should be, everything that came early was only a prelude to the final landfall. On the first morning, the proportioned elegance of Tenby, on the right hand, faced the picturesque coasts of the monastic island of Caldy on the other; and pretty little puffs of practice shrapnel popped over head. That was Caldy Sound. Next, the dour and unsmashable cliffs of Pembrokeshire: a drunken and uncontrolled catapulting through the eye of a needle—that, the thundering cataracts and whirlpools, was Jack Sound in the full strength of a spring tide. Then followed a long, peaceful, tedious, ruminative, sunny ambling across the streamless waters of Cardigan Bay, on the seventy-mile passage to Portmadoc Bar: and, finally, that incomparable landfall of the summits of almost every mountain in North Wales springing in a horse-shoe shape out of the milky sea.

There is a passage in *The Cruise of the Nona*, included in the new collection of Hilaire Belloc's sea writings, which describes the effect of that sight upon him:

> There is no corner of Europe that I know, not even the splendid amphitheatre standing in tiers of high Alpine wall around Udine, which so moves me with the awe and majesty of great things as does this mass of the northern Welsh mountains seen from this corner of their silent sea.
>
> Few can recall it, for few visit that corner of the salt . . . . Indeed, this lack of fame applies to perhaps half the greater visions, even of the modern over-frequented and travelled earth. Men know half of them to satiety, but the other half they never see . . . . So it is with this awful parade of the great mountains standing on guard over the northern corner of Cardigan Bay, seen from the silence and the flat of ocean, towering above its glass; and all that late afternoon and evening I adored them until, with the last of the light, and a westerly air which was but the suggestion of a breeze, we groped north anxiously for the opening to Portmadoc channel. How I should make it, even upon the flood, in the darkness, I knew not; for the sands there are miles wide, and this channel (which I had never yet made) shifts continually.

It is true that this scene is little known; but Mr. Belloc is not in fact the first writer to have been impressed with its majesty. So far as I know, Peacock was no yachtsman, but there is a passage in *Headlong Hall* which describes a similar (though rather closer) view of these same mountains—from the Portmadoc Embankment, which was just then being built. For hitherto a long tidal tongue of the sea had run up almost to Aberglaslyn—to the very feet of the Snowdon range: but now Enterprise was building a barrier, at huge expense, across the mouth, to shut the sea out. The project was misguided enough even to win the support of Shelley: but Peacock was far from friendly to it:

> The tide was ebbing: it had filled the vast basin within, forming a lake about five miles in length and more than one in breadth.
>
> As they looked upwards with their backs to the open sea, they beheld a scene which no other in this country can parallel, and which the admirers of the magnificence of Nature will ever remember with regret, whatever consolation may be derived from the probable utility of the works which have excluded the waters from their ancient receptacle. Vast rocks and precipices, intersected with little torrents, formed the barrier on the left: on the right, the triple summit of Moelwyn reared its majestic boundary: in the depth was that sea of mountains, the wild and stormy outline of the Snowdonian chain, with the giant Wyddfa towering in the midst. The mountain-frame remains unchanged, unchangeable: but the liquid mirror it enclosed is gone.

However, the *stuff* of Mr. Belloc's marine (as of his terrene) writing is not in the main the evocation of scenic grandeur: it is rather the discursive expression of his opinions and prejudices. On sea, as on shore, he writes essays, strung together (in the case of the *Nona*) into a narrative; or just plain—essays.

Now it may seem strange that there have been hitherto many essays tagged on to a country walk: few to a sail in the bay. It may seem odd that it should have been left to Mr. Belloc, in these latter days, to be such a pioneer. But there is a lurking unsatisfactoriness in Mr. Belloc's nautical essays which gives, I think, the answer. The mood of the sea, and the mood of the shore, are so wide apart: the emotional premisses of the sea and of the land differ as widely as the intellectual premisses of Einstein and Euclid. On shore everything is shaped and worn and marked by the hand and brain of man: every sight and smell and sound is linked to man—and so can be used to link the essayist to his reader. But the sea is, as the Greeks put it, "unploughed." To-day, as two thousand years ago, it is still untrodden, unworn, unlittered. The sea curls up under your bows—virgin: it closes cleanly behind your rudder—virgin for the next comer. Yours is the only ship to sail it between Genesis and Doomsday. Only the intoxication of untrodden snow can rival it; and even in untrodden snow you leave your *own* black footmarks. In short, in sailing there is nothing to remind you of your fellow man: rather everything (and this was my opening theme) to cut you off from him.

What then is the intimate essayist to do, pen in hand in his cockleboat? He is in a dilemma. The most *truthful* thing he can do is to enter his position, course, wind-force and direction, in the log-book; and then put his pen away. For the sea is not an approach to the reader, it is a severance. But if he is obstinate, determined to write, there are only two courses open to him. He may honestly try to depict the mood which the sea engenders. But this mood is so different from anything which the reader knows, that the reader will reject it as unreal, and—worse than unreal—uninteresting: at any rate, lacking wholly in the intricate intimacy, and the varied web of subject, which is expected of the essayist. Alternatively, the essayist may close the cabin hatch, put his feet on the cabin stove, and try to forget that he is at sea at all. He will use the sea as his *mise-en-scène* only: the play will recollect the land. Gulls will take the place of cawing rooks: green billowing waters will take the place of rolling fields: but the thoughts will be the thoughts a man thinks when he is strolling in a country lane.

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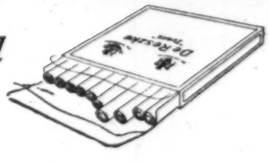

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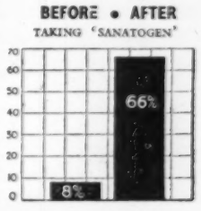

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This, then, is the dilemma in which Mr. Belloc has found himself: and his solution has in most cases been the latter one. I expect that his choice was deliberate: but one or other course was forced upon him. The result is that unsatisfactory quality to which I have referred. For the landsman, the nautical *mise-en-scène* has added nothing to the value of these essays—a walk in the Sussex Weald would have served better. For the seaman, Belloc reads too much like a landsman at sea to be wholly acceptable. His hand may be gripping a bucking tiller: but his head is on shore.

Is he just putting that on, to spin his essays? I wonder. For instance, if he had really considered the problem, would he have been quite so ready with his condemnation of that Portmadoc pilot? For surely, given the circumstances, the pilot was wholly and entirely in the right.

It would be a pity if I have given the impression that *The Cruise of the Nona*, in especial, is not worth reading. That would be overstating the case. My intention has been rather to try and trace out why it lacks, in my opinion, some of the best qualities of Mr. Belloc's other books. But the fault in Mr. Belloc's sea writings, oddly enough, is distilled in this collection of their choicest passages, so as to be concentrated: so as to render this Marine Beauties of Belloc, though well-chosen, unquestionably much *less* worth reading than any single one of the books from which it is culled. RICHARD HUGHES

DEMOCRACY IN PERSPECTIVE

Democracy Today and Tomorrow. By EDUARD BENES. *Macmillan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Logician though he is, like every Continental, Dr. Benes is sufficiently familiar with the political history and institutions of the English-speaking world to avoid snap judgments or those exercises in abstraction which disfigure so many essays in political philosophy. Above all, he succeeds in conveying through the conventional terms and categories an idea of the essential complexity of his theme. Not for a moment does he present the democratic society as being equivalent with the Parliamentary system: indeed he takes no great stock in political forms at all. What matters, he suggests, is that society be contrived so as to offer a maximum of freedom for the human personality—in the familiar French idiom, the dignity of man. And we are participating to-day in a life-and-death struggle

> for the transformation of the old purely political bourgeois democracy into a new, higher and at the same time deeper and more perfect democracy which I will call *humanitarian democracy*.

These lectures are reprinted, with virtually no change, from the course which Dr. Benes was invited to give at the University of Chicago in the spring of 1939. They are distinguished particularly by the author's unusually broad perspective. For him the democratic purpose is summed up in man's striving for a better society; and it is a continuous process which has been going on since the eighteenth-century ferment which produced the American and French revolutions. Because evolution proceeds by waves and not in a straight line—Bergson, we may remember, prefers another metaphor—there are necessarily periods of recession and at any time all manner of cross-currents. The essential thing is to fasten on the element of continuity supplied by history. Thus many of the phenomena of the totalitarian State are directly derivative, whatever the Nazis or Fascists may say, from those same nurseries of democracy as we know it—the American and French revolutions.

In recent years, as Dr. Benes observes, the fight for human freedom has been overlaid—" almost completely hidden " is the author's phrase—by the power-political ambitions of the dictatorships and the fear of world social revolution of the ruling classes in the western European democracies. Dr. Benes is disposed to blame Communism to a substantial extent for the downfall of the democracies: but he does not fail to indict the European bourgeoisie (he is talking to an American audience, remember) for their " absurdly exaggerated " fear of social revolution.

For the historically minded Dr. Benes indicates a plausible enough parallel between the struggle among the governing classes and castes at the end of the feudal period—which led to the State absolutism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—and the " relentless struggle " of political parties in our time which brought about democracy's downfall. Here he is drawing, however, exclusively on Continental experience. The moral is that democracy is its own gravedigger unless it learn the modes and habits of responsibility. W. HORSFALL CARTER.

DETECTION IN FRANCE

Maigret Travels South. By GEORGES SIMENON. *Routledge.* 8*s.* 3*d.*

Death at the Bar. By NGAIO MARSH. *Collins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Murder for the Asking. By GEORGE HARMON COXE. *Heinemann.* 8*s.* 3*d.*

Eight Faces at Three. By CRAIG RICE. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

While She Sleeps. By ETHEL LINA WHITE. Collins. 7*s.* 6*d.*

Death on Sunday. By JOHN RHODE. *Collins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Verdict of Twelve. By RAYMOND POSTGATE. *Collins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Footprints on the Ceiling. By CLAYTON RAWSON. *Collins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The French never cared for acrostics and are very half-hearted about their *mots croisés*, so one does not expect them to appreciate the abstruse satisfaction to be got from detective stories. Crime they relish, but for the sake of its excitement and recklessness, not for its diabolical ingenuity: they invented the frivolous Arsène Lupin as a retort to the portentous omniscience of Holmes. Since Holmes' day English detectives have become steadily less omniscient but more painstaking and conscientious: the bloodhound's nose is keener than ever, but his legs have grown terribly short, and a crime that Holmes would have galloped through in half an hour of the *Strand Magazine* now occupies 300 pages, and leaves reader, author, detective and criminal dead beat. No Frenchman in his senses would attempt to emulate such typical Anglo-Saxon phlegm. M. Georges Simenon, the best known of modern French detection writers, is now being translated into English, and his Inspector Maigret cases will appear over here at quarterly intervals to lighten our usual diet of stodge.

How does this French ace compare with our oldtimers? He holds one great advantage—he works twice as fast. There are two cases in *Maigret Travels South*, each only half as long as its English counterpart would have been. Inspector Maigret is one of those psychological detectives who get all their results by studying character. What a temptation to indulge in superfluous characterisation for the misleading of readers! But M. Simenon never allows his characters to take liberties; they can present themselves distinctly, but must not expand their chests to our annoyance. Maigret himself is a reel of sensitised celluloid exposed to a criminal atmosphere; every phenomenon of light and shade is recorded impartially and the detective claims no advantage over the reader in interpretation. All you have to do is to get the right snapshots in focus in order to see the villain staring you in the face. Yet it is not quite so easy as it looks, or M. Simenon would have failed as an artist. The complete passivity of the recording machine is most deceptive. An English reader is always on the lookout for trick photography, and there is none; not a shadow of emphasis intrudes. Possibly with more experience of Maigret's technique the solutions will come easier, for we shall know exactly what we expect to see, i.e. the one character not only physically but *morally* capable of the crime in question. If *Maigret Travels South* is a fair sample, M. Simenon is going to make a great many English friends. He may not be the equal of our Mrs. Christie, but he trounces the tedious prolixity of our second-class writers. He may even, by his example, introduce into our detection a new era of brevity and sincerity. But one might as well hope that the Expeditionary Force will come back liking French cooking!

Miss Marsh is an oldtimer in point of output—she has already eight books on her shelf—but not in bad habits. She never loses her enthusiasm for her trade and is always trying to improve. *Death at the Bar* is as competent a story as she has yet written. In the bar of a Devonshire inn a rather provoking K.C. dies of cyanide poisoning after a game of darts. Nearly everyone present has a political, financial or sexual motive to get rid of him. All the characters are lively, all the suspects plausibly suspicious and the clue is scrupulously fair. If only you knew whether Miss Marsh was a member of the Left Book Club you could be surer of your solution, but I'm not telling. *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (Mrs. Christie's first novel) may provide a pointer to the authoress's technique, and she could not have followed a better instructress. With so much praise I regret to record that Miss Marsh still thinks dialect intrinsically funny, and that Royal Academicians come out of the top drawer of painters.

Murder for the Asking and *Eight Faces at Three* represent solution by gun and solution by liquor respectively. In *Murder for the Asking* Mr. Coxe uses a milder type of detective than his

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usual Kent Murdock, without altering the strength of his other ingredients, consequently the poor fellow is constantly on the verge of death or marriage—either of which spells failure in his profession. The eight faces are the faces of clocks which have been all stopped at three for no valid reason except to provide a title to *Eight Faces at Three*. Mr. Craig Rice's plot is not as original as his title—just the story of a rich old lady murdered for her money—but there is a beautiful girl falsely suspected, and another ready to wear blue satin pyjamas until the crime is solved. So away we go in the best tradition, with rye and bourbon ahead and speed cops behind, to an exciting but rather muddled solution.

Miss Lina White is famous for her suspensory power; she can keep an audience breathless longer than anyone since Henry James died, so it is said. *While She Sleeps* is one of her deep-breathing exercises. Miss Loveapple intends to stop for a night in her empty London house on her return from a holiday abroad. Miss Lina White arranges an unpleasant surprise with an iron poker for Miss Loveapple on the appointed date. Miss Loveapple has a fortnight and 200 pages to keep the appointment. Could even Henry James equal that?

Mr. Rhode has picked the easiest plot in the world for himself in *Death on Sunday*—a murdered blackmailer. But it would have worked out better had he decided from the first whom to saddle with the crime. If a criminal cap is to fit properly it must be made to measure, and not just an elastic article kept in stock until page 280 and crammed on the least likely head at that juncture.

Mr. Postgate's first venture into the criminal arena is called a "slice of life" by his publishers; that is not the cake I should ascribe it to. *Verdict of Twelve* is a character study of the participants in a murder case, together with the story of the crime, a description of the trial, and an account of the psychological forces influencing the jury to reach their final verdict; the whole delivered in such a clever, condescending tone that readers should be ashamed to dissociate themselves from the author's poor opinion of mankind in general and capitalist justice in particular. Another time Mr. Postgate might leave out personal politics and morals from his slice.

Mr. Rawson is a conjurer as well as detective author, and his crimes are solved by Merlini, a professional magician. There are some explanations of conjuring tricks in *The Footprints on the Ceiling* which are worth knowing, but the crime is mechanical and untidily staged and the characters wooden. Mr. Rawson must conjure more life into his plots if he is to carry on his sleight of hand.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

THE SILURIST

The Swan of Usk. By HELEN ASHTON. *Collins.* 9*s.*

Miss Helen Ashton wrote a novel, *William and Dorothy*, about the Wordsworths which was a triumph of tact and restrained imagination. She now gives us a similar book about Vaughan the Silurist. She is scrupulously scholarly, reduces dialogue to a minimum, and invents hardly any part except the character of the poet's two wives. But whereas there is a whole pyramid of documentation about the Wordsworths, few facts are known about Vaughan. Consequently, Miss Ashton has had to fall back on a reconstruction of his times. In particular she devotes a large part of the book to the Civil War, in which Vaughan fought with the Cavaliers. Some readers may find this rather dull: the strategic purposes of the campaign are not explained, and we see it only in the way Vaughan saw it—as a series of miseries, fatigues and perplexities. But the youth of the poet in the Welsh Marches, at Oxford and in London, is beautifully presented. Vaughan emerges as a quiet, benevolent, pensive man, not very interesting. It is doubtful if he was as amiable as Miss Ashton pretends: his preface to *Silex Scintillans* (1655) is aggressively puritanical and calls for a stricter censorship of literature, while Antony à Wood describes him as proud and "humorous"—that is capricious or peevish. The mysticism that has lifted him into the firmament of English poetry is, wisely, given little space by Miss Ashton, but his practice as a physician affords an occasion for most interesting accounts of seventeenth-century medicine, including such characters as Harvey and Culpepper. Although Vaughan is not a good subject for a novel, *The Swan of Usk* is a scholarly and notably well written book, which plunges the reader into the period it describes. A biography of Vaughan does not exist, and this novel, so slight are its fictitious elements, can be recommended as a substitute.

Europe Since Versailles: LOW. **The Penguin Political Dictionary:** compiled by WALTER THEIMER. **A Book of Lear:** edited by R. L. MÉGROZ. **Go She Must:** DAVID GARNETT. **All Passion Spent:** V. SACKVILLE-WEST. **National Velvet:** ENID BAGNOLD. *Penguin Books.* 6*d. each.*

This new batch of Penguins is particularly good. First there is an extra-special, a hundred of Low's cartoons telling in their devastating manner the history of Europe in the inter-war years. Then a special, *The Penguin Political Dictionary*, an admirable reference book, concise, clear and comparatively impartial, with an excellent system of cross-references. The utility and propaganda value of these two books at this time it is hardly necessary to emphasise. Edward Lear is another choice which the times abundantly justify. Edited by R. L. Mégroz, this selection includes limericks, nonsense songs, a nonsense story and a nonsense cookery; a second volume is to follow. The novels include a David Garnett, a V. Sackville-West, and an Enid Bagnold. While the price of other books is rising, Penguins remain at sixpence, and even if they had to rise to a shilling they would still be a remarkable proposition. Their success has shown that there is a market, apart from the libraries, for good books if they are cheap enough, and that paper covers are not, as past experience has seemed to show, an insuperable bar to sales. Perhaps the difficulties of war-production will persuade an enterprising publisher to draw this analogy in relation to new books.

Marie Corelli. By GEORGE BULLOCK. *Constable.* 12*s.*

That this book is disappointing is due partly to the subject and partly to the author. Once Mr. Bullock has established that Marie Corelli was in all probability the illegitimate daughter of Dr. Mackay by a woman he subsequently married, his revelations are finished. After that, he is compelled to pad out the story of an uneventful life with detailed descriptions of the squabbles between Miss Corelli and her neighbours at Stratford-on-Avon, and with inadequate précis of the plots of her novels. The book comes to life again when, towards the end, Mr. Bullock devotes a chapter on the love affair with Arthur Severn, which brought a touch of unpleasant reality to a life otherwise consistently maintained on the level of the novelette. Miss Corelli thought that she had found her *grande passion*: Mr. Severn was at first tickled by her—purely spiritual—admiration, and then irritated. Finally, one evening Miss Corelli, carried away by the beauties of nature, exclaimed to him: "Oh, listen to the ouwels." "For god's sake say 'owls,' woman, if it is owls you mean," and the one love affair in Miss Corelli's life ended abruptly. Her own picture of it is given in her posthumous novel, *Open Confession: To a Man from a Woman*, a book with some moments of true pathos. The only way to make a study of a best-seller interesting is to set the novels against their social background and examine the causes of their success. Mr. Bullock is not equipped for this task. Though he refers to her distinguished admirers—famous ecclesiastics, Mr. Gladstone, Edward VII and even Oscar Wilde—and describes her feuds with the reviewers, he hardly mentions her real public or compares her influence with that of the popular press and the films. A literary study of this best-seller is waste of time; but it is what Mr. Bullock has attempted. The best thing in the book is the coloured picture of her in her gondola, *The Dream*, on the Avon.

Two Roads to Africa. By H. E. SYMONS. *Gifford.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

It robs the pioneers of speed of some of the credit they deserve that their experiences are so quickly over. But the skill and endurance, the forethought, even the patience, that win success in ventures like those described in this book, are of the same order as that of the slow-moving explorers of an earlier age whose fame is assured. The story told here is of motor dashes—one from Algiers to Kano through the heart of the great Sahara in a fraction over three days, another from London to Cape Town in thirty-one days, twelve of them waiting for the car to be recovered from the bottom of an equatorial river. It is quite possible that, as in the writer's prefatory dream, the chain of depots, petrol dumps and rest-houses already fringing the desert and bush tracks may be the precursors of real roads, and the roads the means of transporting well-boring machinery and of general trade. This apparently freak motoring makes its own useful contribution to the desirable end of putting Africa on the map. The book may be tipped to anyone wanting a present for a boy with a mechanical bent or a taste for adventure—which is to say for almost any boy. The style is rather of the smoke-room, but it flows, and the pictures, especially of the Sahara, live.

Baltic Roundabout. By BERNARD NEWMAN. *Herbert Jenkins.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Bernard Newman's book cannot help bringing with it a flavour of tragedy, like the arrival of the wedding dress the day after the bride has been murdered. Reading it now cannot but make it a background to the Russian war. Newman has a bicycle, dubbed George, but George is more than a mere whimsy, he is the true partner of these tours, and takes a good half share of the labour and the merit. In 1935 they went to Albania, in 1936 to Spain, 1937 to Czechoslovakia, and in 1938 Newman rode through Memel, Danzig, the Polish Corridor. The book is best claimed as interesting, for just as Mr. Newman in Sweden is just the same as Mr. Newman in Finland, so also are peasants in Sweden like peasants in Finland. He starts in Denmark, goes over to Sweden, to Finland via the problematical Aaland Islands. Russia is barred to them, and the latter part of the tour he rides

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SWISS COTTAGE. Beautiful large double room, 22s.; 2-roomed flat, kitchenette, 28s.; other rooms, 12s. 6d., 16s. Less unfurnished. Service, meals, optional. 117 Fellows Road, N.W.3. PRI. 3080.

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CHARMING Bijou Guest House newly decorated, furnished, H. & C., garden. Rooms including breakfast, dinner, bath, light, 35s. weekly. Buses Nos. 1, 8, 16, 60, 92. Near Tube Station. 80 Maida Vale, W.9. MAI. 1930.

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SWISS Cottage. Really comfortable, attractive, divan rooms and studios, from 15s. 6 Belsize Square, N.W.3. Pri. 3426.

YOUNG man of small means would share flat, Westminster. NEW STATESMAN outlook preferred. Box 6820.

HOUSES, FLATS, PROPERTY, Etc.
For Sale and To Let

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FURNISHED Bungalow, Lancing. Sleep four, garden, sea, downs. 30s. weekly. BEAVAN, 11 Clifton Terrace, Brighton.

LAKE DISTRICT. Cottage to let furnished. Sleep 5. £1 week long let. Would exchange for accommodation in South-West, April–May. Box 6795.

Prize for a SHORT STORY

Readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION *are invited by The Regent Institute to accept a prize offer which must appeal to everyone who is interested in short story writing.*

Even if you have never before attempted to write a story this invitation gives you the chance to determine whether you have any aptitude for fiction writing.

Briefly, you are asked to submit a short story, which may be of any length from 1,500 to 6,000 words—or you may send instead a humorous sketch of any length from 300 words upwards.

There is no restriction on plot or type of story. You may submit any kind of tale—dramatic or humorous, realistic or sentimental.

Everyone has a story in his or her own life. No matter how humdrum that life has been it contains at least one complete episode which would, properly handled by a writer, entertain readers.

But there are more fictional possibilities in one's life than that. The trained story writer—the man or woman who has learnt how to find plots and how to construct them—realises that almost every day of one's life holds material from which plots can be built.

It is training that enables one to appreciate the fictional possibilities of such commonplace incidents as omitting to close a door, mislaying a letter, losing an attaché case, going home from work by a different route—an absorbing plot could easily be built around any one of those trivial occurrences.

Your entry need not be typewritten.

* * *

Every reader of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION who submits a short story (or humorous sketch) to the Regent Institute will be presented with a copy of "Famous Short Stories Analysed" (118 pages), which contains a selection of tales—with a commentary on each—by masters of the art of the short story. The volume is attractively bound in green cloth, and makes a useful addition to the bookshelf of anyone interested in short story writing as a profitable hobby.

If you submit a story you will also receive a free expert criticism and a copy of the Institute's prospectus, which describes the great field of opportunity for the new writer, and gives particulars of the courses in article and short story writing conducted by that well-known correspondence school.

Your story will be returned with the free criticism. You do not commit yourself to any obligation and, of course, you retain the copyright of your MS.

Important.—All entries must be headed "Short Story Prize Offer," and be addressed to The Regent Institute (Dept. 191E), Palace Gate, London, W.8. Be sure to write your name and address in the top right-hand corner of your story.

HOUSES, FLATS, etc.—continued

W.8. Small detached cottage, Campden Hill. Central heating. All electric. £125 p.a. Tenant for room left furnished if desired. Box 6791.

CONVENIENT CENTRAL Divan Flatlets in quiet garden square. Every requirement. Wartime terms. Resident Proprietress. 14 Talbot Square, W.2. 2 minutes Paddington and Lancaster Gate Stations.

CLAPHAM COMMON. Author's flat to let, furnished, 21A North Side, Clapham Common. Accommodation for four. 30s. a week, excluding light and heat. Write, or 'phone Macaulay 3669.

44 MECKLENBURGH SQUARE, W.C.1. Top flat unfurnished to let, £2 p.w. 3 rooms, B., K. Keys with housekeeper or MESSRS. PENMAN, 104 Guilford Street, W.C.1. Box 6798.

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THACKERAY HOTEL.
OPPOSITE the British Museum, Great Russell St., W.C.1. Telephones and free electric heating in all bedrooms. Numerous Private Bathrooms. Bedroom, Bath and Breakfast from 9s. 6d. per night. Illustrated Booklet and Inclusive Terms on application.

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THREE WAYS, MICKLETON, GLOS. A Cotswold country house hotel of character and charm in safe area. Warmth, comfort, good food. Ideal Winter and Spring quarters. Moderate terms. A.A., R.A.C.

PERFECT peace. Vi-spring beds, home-made butter, fresh fruit, cream, log fires. 14th century Manor Farm. Upper Quinton, Stratford-on-Avon.

RYE, Sussex. Old Hope Anchor Private Hotel. Quiet situation. Central heating and log fires. H. and C. all bedrooms. 'Phone 126.

SALTDEAN, Brighton. GLENDOWER, first-class guest house. Tel.: Rottingdean 9552.

SEAFORD. MISS MITCHELL, Claremont House. (Seaford 3008.) Facing sea: h. and c. water in bedrooms; own garden produce. Vegetarian.

WHITE LODGE HOTEL, SALTDEAN, SUSSEX. Overlooking sea, with all modern comforts. Rottingdean 9614.

FITTLEWORTH, Sussex. Fortrie Guest House. Real Country. Comfort, good beds and cooking. Breakfast in bed if desired. 'Phone: 61.

TORQUAY, Howden Court Hotel. 4 minutes to sea by private path, garden, attractive sun lounge. Private sitting rooms and private bathrooms if required. A.A. appointed. Tel.: 280711.

CORNISH RIVIERA. Green Bank Hotel, Fowey. Facing South. H. & C. Electric fires. From 45s. Write for Tariff. 'Phone 63.

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON. South Devon Coast. "Mountway" Guest House. Modern comfort. Ordinary or vegetarian diet. Telephone 290.

REAL modern comfort, home-grown produce, wonderful Atlantic view, 2 acres, all go to make holidays at Rockingham, Westward Ho! Devon ideal. 2½–4 gns. MISS FOLL (Northam 183).

LOVELY LAKELAND. Comfort and convenience with congenial company. Vegetarian diet. BECK ALLANS, GRASMERE.

FEDERATION? YES!—of fireside, friendliness and food. Let the countryside bring you the benediction of the quiet mind and stay at the Pillar Hotel, Langdale Estate, Near Ambleside English Lakes. Illustrated booklet on request.

EDINBURGH. Manor Hotel, 50 Manor Place. Small quiet, comfortable, modern. Terms from 13s. 6d. per day. Reduction per week. Tel.: 228191.

PEACE and plenty at Lough Gara Hotel, Monasteraden, Co. Sligo. Own farm produce, cars and boats for hire; fishing, tennis, etc. From 3 gns. a week.

LITERARY

YOUR SURPLUS REVIEW COPIES, AND ANY OTHER BOOKS BOUGHT FOR CASH, LOEB CLASSICS WANTED. L. SIMMONDS, 184 FLEET STREET, E.C.4. (Holborn 5440.)

"CAN you write?" Booklet explains short-story technique. Sixpence post free from BCM/RFB, London, W.C.1, or ask your bookseller to send for a copy.

BOOKS wanted: Sweets' "Current Shorthand," "Why Nazi," "It Isn't Done." Box 6826

"COMMON SENSE about the War." Copy of George Bernard Shaw's famous Supplement to "The New Statesman," Nov. 14th, 1914. What offers? Box 6832.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Rates and all information on page 192

through the Baltic republics and meets there more interesting people than he has discovered hitherto. Newman lectures at a University amid great enthusiasm, talks with an Esthonian M.P. whose salary is docked each time he or a colleague miss a Parliamentary session. The last stretch is across Germany, during the Czech crisis, and the opinions he heard expressed are now *vieux-jeu*. For an interested, non-political, account of the Baltic States, this book is helpful if rather negative.

Decisive Battles. By MAJOR-GENERAL J. F. C. FULLER. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 16*s.*

The saying that war decides nothing is as false as most generalisations. *Some* battles have been decisive, though probably no two scholars would draw up the same list of twenty. When a distinguished soldier like General Fuller makes his choice we may not agree with him—was Hattin or Lepanto really decisive?—but we know we shall learn, as we learnt from Creasy in youth.

He has to begin somewhere, and he starts with Alexander. Perhaps, as Dean Stanley thought, Beth-horon was more important than Arbela; and one might say a word for Carchemish; but the tactics of those battles are unknown to us, whereas there is instruction to be gained, even to-day, from every one of the eighteen described by General Fuller. He goes back to the original authorities, and the research involved in his work, as indicated by the hundreds of references, is immense. The slips are very few. Who was the "King John" that perished in the "Destruction of Mohacz"? It was not at Marston Moor that Rupert chased the defeated enemy too far—he was chased himself.

Both to students and to the general reader the work can be confidently recommended, and we shall eagerly await the succeeding volume. But we hope the General will look to his grammar. Over and over again we have "lay," transitive, as a past tense: "Prussia was the spear-head which lay low the great Napoleon." Here is a characteristic sentence: "This and the fact that the Pope had formed the Holy League against Charles, that monarch marched on Rome." As for our old friend the "unattached participle," it is as ubiquitous and as annoying as the guerrillas of Spain in 1811.

Inside the Gestapo. By HANSJÜRGEN KOEHLER. *Pallas Publishing Co.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Sensational books by people who claim to have been members of the inner circle of the Gestapo seem to be in fashion now. If you like this kind of reading, *Inside the Gestapo* by H. Koehler is better than most of its kind. It also claims to be an autobiographical account of German espionage abroad, and the work of the Gestapo inside Germany. Like its predecessors it has descriptions of personal encounters with famous Nazi leaders, it has yet another, and different account of the June 30th purge. Of course Herr Koehler was present at Roehm's execution; there would appear from recent books to have been quite a gallery of people present. And he too was intimately connected with the work of the Nazis in Spain and Switzerland. He aims at getting the last drop of melodramatic effect out of the events he is relating, but the stories themselves seldom live up to the promise of their startling openings. It is unfortunate that we are unable to check the authenticity of this material because, in spite of being well written, not all of it carries conviction. This author has paid more attention to accuracy in detail, and the obvious mistakes in this book are few. Perhaps it is natural to feel distaste for people who profess to have taken an active part in the inhuman work of the Gestapo, and then write with pride of their heroic achievements whil t weeping over the fate of their victims.

BOOKS TO COME

A selection from the letters of Fanny Boscawen, wife of Pitt's favourite admiral, who was known in France as La Sévigné d'Angleterre, will be published by Longmans on February 19th under the title, *Admiral's Wife*. General Cecil Aspinall-Oglander is the editor.

On the same day Longmans publish *Towards a Pattern*, a kind of spiritual autobiography by Mrs. St. Aubyn, daughter of the first Lord Carnock and sister of Mr. Harold Nicolson, in which the author tells the story of her conversion to the Catholic Faith.

A far-reaching criticism of British military technique is embodied in *If Germany Attacks*, by Captain G. C. Wynne, due from Fabers on February 22nd. The author, who is a member of the Imperial Defence Committee, examines the development of the German defensive battle with particular reference to Passchendaele and argues that the British Army has not yet learnt the lessons to be derived from a study of German method.

Dr. Anne Walter Fearn, author of an autobiography, *My Days of Strength*, coming from Hale on February 19th, is a woman doctor who has practised medicine for forty years in China.

The Unfinished War, by Eric Moore Ritchie, to be published by Eyre and Spottiswoode on February 16th, is an account of the Anglo-German conflict in Africa and a reasoned statement of the case for refusing to return the African colonies to Germany.

Rich and Cowan announce for February 16th *Still Eastward Bound*, the autobiography of John Lindsay, author of *The Lovely Quaker*, the story of Hannah Lightfoot and George III. Mr. Lindsay writes of his work as a schoolmaster and his life in Suffolk. On the same day this firm publish *The Prophetess of Santa Barbara*, by Cunliffe Owen, a novel dealing with the Jesuit attempt to create an Utopia in Paraguay.

The Cambridge University Press will shortly publish *The Machinery of Justice in England*, by Dr. R. M. Jackson, Solicitor of the Supreme Court and lecturer in law at Cambridge. This account of the system of English courts and the way they work is intended for the ordinary citizen. In his description of the institutions through which lawyers work the author shows how the attempt to treat law as a pure science is succumbing to a more sociological approach.

Philip Jordan, *News Chronicle* war correspondent formerly in Spain, has written a novel, *Say That She Were Gone*, in which the Siege of Madrid is described. It is a spy story. Heinemanns publish it on February 19th.

Yet another autobiography. Mr. Lennox Kerr, author of the Glenshiels novels, who began life as a butcher's apprentice, tells the story of his life in *The Eager Years*, coming from Collins on February 12th.

Methuen announce a new novel by Eden Phillpotts—*Chorus of Clowns*, "a grim study of rural life"—for February 15th.

The publication date of W. B. Yeats' *Last Poems and Plays* (Macmillan) has been brought forward from February 27th to February 15th.

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

Week-end Competitions

No. 522

Set by R. G. E. Willison

Most people treasure at least one book which, while it is neither obscure nor very difficult to obtain, is not known to the majority of "common readers." How few Londoners interested in the arts seem to know J. T. Smith's *Nollekens and his Times*, a real eighteenth-century gossip book with more than a spice of malice. Is there any Glasgow man who would not be gently stirred by W. G. Riddell's *Adventures of an Obscure Victorian* (Macmillan)? While Dr. Dan McKenzies' *Aromatics and the Soul* (Heinemann) is a by-way to lure most people with a nose. The usual prizes of £2 2*s.* and half a guinea are offered for the most enticing recommendations of such a forgotten book. Entries must not exceed 150 words and the name of the publishers should be stated if possible.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Feb. 16th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

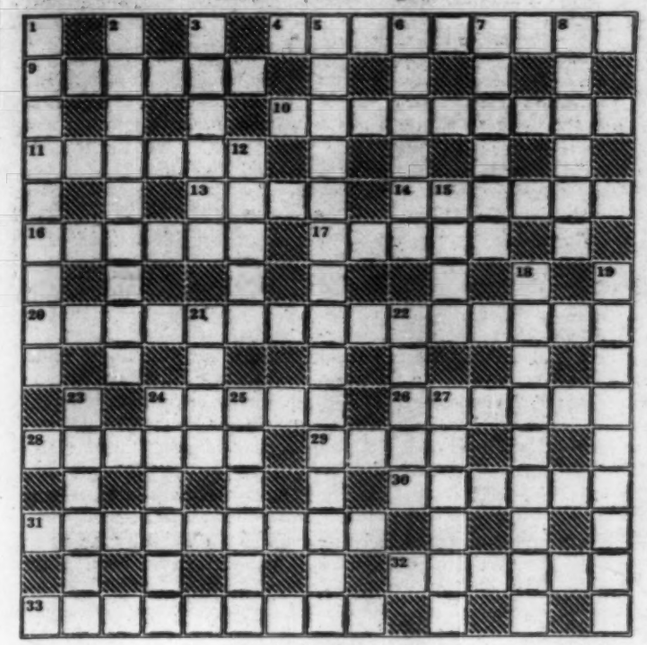
The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 520

Report by R. H. S. Crossman

The trouble in setting a general knowledge paper of this sort is to make it difficult and at the same time amusing. Difficult it has to be, or with a week's grace too many competitors will discover the right answers; and I hope that more people found this paper amusing than the dozen who sent in solutions. Some of the questions—such as the actions of the horse and the cow getting up—could be answered straight off, or with a little thought; others, like the comparative lengths of rivers or the countries bordering on Germany and Russia, needed probably a little industry, but were fairly easily solved. There were one or two traps: the first woman M.P. was not Lady Astor but Countess Markiwiecz, a room on the first floor becomes in America a room on the second floor, it was Rimbaud and not Chatterton who ceased to write at the age of 19, the oldest Parliament in a European democratic country is in Iceland. Surprisingly few competitors got these right. The question which defeated everyone was the last (where are the following pictures and buildings?): 11 out of 26 was the most creditable effort. It has not been easy to apportion marks, but the first three tie with about three-quarters of their answers right, and I recommend that the prizes be divided equally between them. The winners are J. E. H. Blackie, Kate Blackie and Rosemary de Groot. Unfortunately space is so valuable in these times that it has been found impossible to print a list of the correct answers.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 518



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
H. J. Bostock, Shawms, Radford Bank, Stafford

ACROSS

4. Principal pains. (9)
9. Not only acid, but sour. (6)
10. Outcome of a Paris deed. (9)
11. The Quakers' plant. (6)
13. Nothing locally housed, by the poet's pen. (4)
14. More blessed end of a much tried job. (6)
16. Necessary for those who want to get along by coach. (6)
17. I'm just in one vast muddle. (5)
20. They smoke when over work-ed. (15)
24. Walter's other name. (5)
26. The sort of cliff that appears in the forefront of the scenery. (6)
28. One can sit in the shade of its roots. (6)
29. Does not smell as sweet as it sounds. (4)
30. It's in the pink when it's boiling hot. (6)
31. Opposite of a boat log. (9)
32. Serviceable adjective for the seniors. (6)
33. Scholastically speaking, probably a cap and gown. (9)

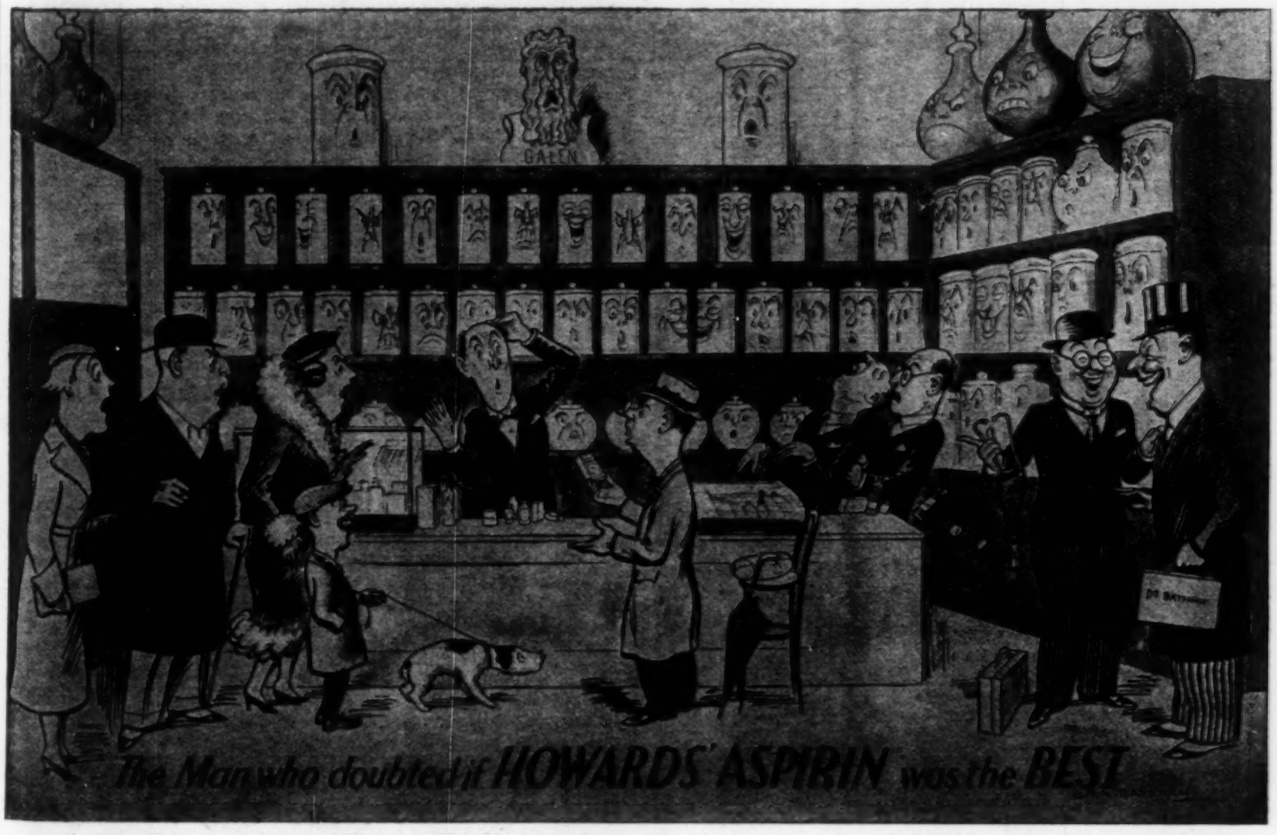
DOWN

1. Obviously very filling. (9)
2. Kids cry at this, of course. (9)
3. Railway adjective? (6)
5. They rose betimes, no doubt, in the Prince Consort's days. (15)
6. A relation of H.G. perhaps. (6)
7. The capitalist has lost his roll. (6)
8. Wanted:—One V.A.D., educated girl—Apply within. (6)
12. Gives you the measure of any step up you may get. (5)
15. A small object in the moat. (4)
18. The wrinkles caused by highbrow stuff. (9)
19. His nickname might well be the same as Napoleon's. (9)
21. Put up with Nora's roan variety. (4)
22. There is less room in the middle. (5)
23. Result of putting a friend on one. (6)
24. Not the waterway. (6)
25. Shows the partiality of the brunette. (6)
27. It's a small horsepower readjustment. (6)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

D	E	R	A	I	L	■	F	R	E	E	D	M	A	N
I	■	A	■	N	■	M	■	A	■	M	■	E	■	O
S	T	I	L	L	R	O	O	M	■	B	A	C	O	N
C	■	L	■	A	■	T	■	I	■	A	■	H	■	C
A	L	W	A	Y	■	O	V	E	R	S	T	A	T	E
R	■	A	■	■	R	■	■	S	■	N	■	■	■	■
D	A	Y	S	C	H	O	O	L	■	A	M	I	H	B
E	■	C	■	R	■	I	■	O	■	G	■	Z	■	E
D	R	A	C	O	■	L	A	T	T	E	R	E	N	D
■	■	R	■	S	■	■	S	■	■	D	■	R	■	■
C	O	R	K	S	C	R	E	W	■	E	T	U	C	A
O	■	I	■	B	■	O	■	I	■	G	■	N	■	G
D	R	A	K	E	■	D	E	F	E	N	D	I	N	G
E	■	G	■	A	■	I	■	E	■	A	■	T	■	L
S	T	E	A	M	I	N	G	■	W	R	A	S	S	E

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

REFORM OF E.P.T.—A SUGGESTION TO THE LABOUR PARTY—RAILWAY TERMS AND COMPENSATION—AUSTRIAN 4½ PER CENT.

THE campaign for the reform of the Excess Profits Tax is in full swing. When representatives of the Federation of British Industries and of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce meet representatives of the Treasury with the object of securing tax relief the representatives of labour naturally become very suspicious. Nevertheless there *is* a case for reform and the case I would like to see presented is (1) that industry and trade as a whole should contribute more, not less, than they are now doing under E.P.T., and (2) that the incidence of the present E.P.T. is inequitable and harmful to enterprise. I have argued this case before and will only repeat the fundamental point—namely, that the existing E.P.T. allows the old-established, prosperous combines in the consumption-goods industries, having fat "standard" years, to contribute relatively little, while it penalises young, developing trades and industries carrying a high degree of trade risk. I have previously suggested the reform scheme of Mr. Kenneth Moore, a business expert on tax affairs, who advocated a "percentage on capital" standard for profits as a fairer basis of tax and the confiscation of all "excessive" profits, i.e. all "unreasonable" profits in excess of that percentage standard. This would undoubtedly swell the Treasury returns. Incidentally, the percentage standard would allow the vital distinction to be made in the varying degrees of capital risk, for capital obviously requires a higher risk premium for investment in, say, film production than it does in gas or electricity supply. Under the old E.P.D. businesses could apply to a Board of Referees for a special percentage standard and the highest was awarded to tin mining with 25 per cent. on capital. (To-day British film production should get 50 per cent.).

* * *

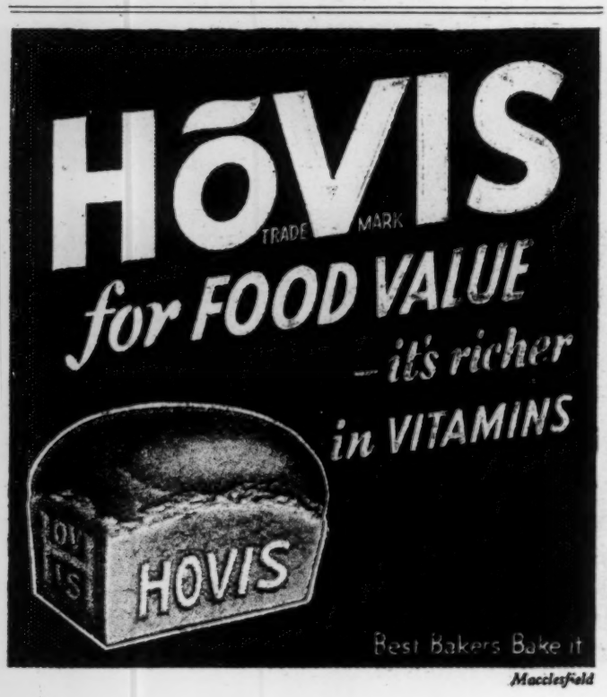
Now Mr. Kenneth Moore makes a valuable suggestion in a letter to the *Times* which, if adopted, might allay labour's suspicions about the reform of E.P.T. and help forward Mr. Keynes' scheme of compulsory savings. It is that, after 60 per cent. of the excess profits has been paid in tax to the Exchequer, the remaining 40 per cent. should be compulsorily loaned to the State, without interest, for the duration of the war. This would dispose of the suspicion that the workers are being asked to make sacrifices while the employers are free to feather their nests with excess war profits. But it would not dispose of the fundamental objection that to make "excessive" profits at all out of war inflation is indefensible, and it would still leave the old-established prosperous combines in the consumption goods trades contributing little, either in tax or forced loan. I would therefore suggest to the Labour Party that it should press for the percentage standard in the coming reform of E.P.T., with the percentages varying according to the capital risk, and, if the confiscation of all "excessive" profits is not practicable, for the forcible surrender of the excess by way of loan to the State without interest. This would be an inducement to workers to lend their "excess" wages also to the Government for the duration of the war. It will be interesting to see how Mr. Keynes deals with these suggestions in the forthcoming modification of his compulsory savings scheme which he is shortly publishing in pamphlet form.

* * *

The Government terms for railway remuneration, which were announced this week after months of hard bargaining, fully justify (thank Heaven!) my recent "bullishness" over the junior home railway stocks. It is right and proper first, that receipts and expenses should be pooled, so that one system does not benefit at the expense of another through special military traffic, and secondly, that the average net revenues of the years 1935 to 1937, which are around £40 millions, should be guaranteed by the Government. The inclusion of 1938 in the average would have been plainly inequitable, for the decline in profits during that year (which was not a bad year for trade as a whole) was mainly due to the unfair trading conditions *vis-à-vis* the roads which were admitted and dealt with in the "Square Deal" agreement of 1939. If any taxpayer should feel aggrieved at the Treasury guarantee of the average net revenues for 1935, 1936 and 1937, I would assure him that the guarantee is not likely to cost anything, for the wartime net revenues are running well in excess of this guaranteed minimum. Further, the taxpayer should rejoice exceedingly that he will now share 50/50 with the railways in any excess revenues over £43½ millions (why the extra allowance over the minimum guarantee was fixed at exactly £3½ millions I do not know) and will pocket 100 per cent. of any excess over the old "standard" revenues (£56 millions) if earnings should mount so high. On the whole, I think both sides have struck a fair bargain. If war had not come the railways would have had a reasonable expectation, with their "Square Deal" operating, of bettering their 1935/36/37 average, and if the war brings extra large profits the Treasury will take directly not less than half of them as well as share indirectly through income tax and excess profits tax. The agreement is probably the stepping-stone to nationalisation after the war, for I doubt whether the railways will ever return to private ownership. It is important also in an economic sense, for it is agreed that neither the railways nor their customers are to be subsidised and that any rise in wages and costs will have to be met by higher railway charges. In other words, it is a realistic as well as a just settlement. It would have been wicked if the Government, because it was paying the railways for Government traffic, had insisted on no raising of rates (as it did in the last war), for that would have meant a dishonest subsidy to the whole cost of living. As there is no fear of any diversion of traffic to the roads under wartime control and petrol rationing, there is no reason why higher railway charges should not be relied upon to offset higher costs. For the investor this settlement has its fascinations. It leaves scope for great improvement in such stocks as L.M.S. 4% (1923) Preference at 53, and L. & N.E. 4% First Preference at 50½, which are now covered even on the minimum revenue guaranteed.

* * *

Now that British and French Government credit have become one for the duration of the war (and perhaps some time after) there has been some improvement in the market price of Austrian 4½ per cent. guaranteed sterling bonds 1934–59 now quoted at 54. Such a hybrid security is difficult to value. Principal and interest are guaranteed as to 24½ per cent. by Great Britain, 24½ per cent. by France, 24½ per cent. by Czechoslovakia and 20½ per cent. by Italy, the balance by four little neutrals. Each guarantor State deposited with the National Bank of Switzerland in the name of the trustee of the loan its own bonds to cover the amount of its guarantee. At 54 the bonds would yield 4 per cent. on the guarantees of Great Britain and France alone, and if Italy were considered good 5.8 per cent. Italy has so far withheld her payments on technical grounds: she has not repudiated. Under 50 I might be tempted to buy these bonds, but if I were disposed to gamble on the victory of the Allied cause I would pick up Finland 5 per cent. and 6 per cent. bonds around 10. Finland enjoyed the highest peacetime credit of any debtor nation and on the defeat of the aggressors she can count on further loans from the United States of America. American support is worth something in peace, if not in war.



COMPANY MEETING

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

LORD WARDINGTON'S ADDRESS

THE eighty-second Ordinary General Meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited was held at the Head Office, London, E.C., on February 2nd. The Right Hon. Lord Wardington (Chairman), who presided, referred to changes in the Board and expressed gratitude to the staff for their ungrudging services and sympathy with them for their added labours and willing co-operation in meeting the difficulties and inconveniences caused by the abnormal conditions arising from withdrawals for National Service and work involved by Government regulations, decentralisation, air raid precautions, etc.

Continuing, he said:

Our current, deposit, and other accounts standing at over £433,000,000 constitute a record in our history, and show an increase over last year of nearly £36,000,000. Our acceptances, endorsements, etc., together show a reduction of £11,000,000, which you would naturally expect in the circumstances. On our assets side, we see a £6,000,000 increase in our cash items, and the large increase of £29,000,000 in our holding of Treasury Bills, one of the least productive forms of assets, but of course highly liquid.

Under the heading of investments there is a welcome change from long-dated to short-dated securities, the former having fallen by nearly £11,500,000, and the latter having increased by £9,500,000. In these days, when such violent changes in the market quotation of investments are liable to take place, it is comforting to know that there can be no doubt as to the ultimate value of so large a proportion of our investments in a few years' time. Our loans and advances, somewhat surprisingly, show a decline of more than £5,000,000. This, I think, must be attributed not to any one reason but to a variety of causes.

It is difficult to prophesy, but I am inclined to think we shall see a greater demand for accommodation in the future.

The profit and loss account shows a net amount brought in for the year somewhat smaller than that of the previous year, in common with the accounts of nearly all other banks. The reasons for this in present circumstances are too well known to require any explanation, and I think, when the dislocation of business and the many added expenses caused by the war are taken into consideration, it is a matter for congratulation that the profit is no smaller than it is. I know there are some people, to judge from their writings and speeches, who seem to think that the country would be stronger if the banks were weaker and are obsessed by the fear lest banking profits should be increased in consequence of the war. They cite the last war as an example of what may happen. Broadly speaking, there was no increase in bank dividends during the last war, and increased profits were used to strengthen the position of the banks, a fact which surely is as much in the interest of the country as it is in that of the banks themselves and their depositors.

Even those least acquainted with the problems of economics realise the absolute necessity of keeping up, and indeed of increasing, our exports. The vast amount of imports which it is essential for us to receive for our daily food and for the means of prosecuting the war, can only be paid for out of our foreign investments, our stock of gold, or our exports. The two former are limited in amount, and in the last resort we rely on our exports.

There is an unique opportunity of gaining fresh markets for these, owing to the fact that Germany is largely cut off from her former trading grounds, but our industrialists have experienced considerable difficulty in doing all that they desire in this respect.

I wish to refer to the problem of rising prices, and the consequent demands for increased buying power with which to meet them. These two tendencies are apt, if unchecked, to chase each other, "one by the lift and the other by the stairs" on an ever-ascending scale. The problem is really a very simple one, though the solution is more complicated. The suggested remedies to counteract this dangerous tendency, and to control prices, are fourfold. A high level of taxation all round, which would curtail the possibility of excessive purchases; rationing, which would have the same effect; the payment of wages, partly in cash and partly in a form of deferred loan certificates; or the voluntary abstention from buying those things which are scarce or which have to be bought from abroad and therefore put a strain on our exchange position. The last remedy is the only one in which the private individual can take the initiative, and he is definitely asked to do so in the interests of the country and to lend what he saves by so doing to the Government.

Before moving the adoption of the report and dividend resolution the Chairman referred to the comprehensive agreement between this country and France and asked if it were fanciful to hope that "the seeds of a possible economic commonwealth of Europe thus sown in the winter of war will burst forth into strong growth when the springtime of peace arrives."

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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